Vicki Belo faces 4 criminal cases
METRO / A25

Yankees bag 27th World Series crown
SPORTS/ A22

Iran protesters brave beatings
WORLD/ A32

Actor-politicos' films face Comelec ban
ENTERTAINMENT/ G1

No 'midnight sale' but gov't selling assets

By Philip C. Taboza and Jerome Aning

DESPITE A SENATOR'S WARNING ABOUT the "midnight sale" of government assets during the remaining months of the Arroyo administration, the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) will proceed

NO MIDNIGHT/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, November 6, 2009 ••• Vol. 24 / No. 331

PARDON SEEKER Convicted child rapist Romeo Jalosjos plans to seek his old seat as Zamboanga del Norte representative.

Palace rejects talks with oil companies

But price freeze may be lifted partially

By TJ Burgonio and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

MALACAÑANG YESterday rejected the appeal of oil companies for a dialogue with President Macapagal-Arroyo on the possible recall of an executive order freezing fuel prices in Luzon, which remains in a state of calamity.

But Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera indicated that the order may soon be lifted in specific areas as the government and oil firms try to reach an agreement on a mutually acceptable response to the devastation wrought by successive storms.

"There may be a lifting (of the freeze order) in certain areas such that only specific local government units are covered. This is part of the response that may come in different forms," Devanadera told reporters.

Ms. Arroyo's spokespersons balked at the appeal for a dialogue with the President, saying that oil industry leaders should be content to air their concerns

PALACE/ A19

LEAN AND MEAN Boxing champion Manny "PacMan" Pacquiao lifts his shirt to show his six-pack beside two beauties sporting bare midriffs at the Wild Card Boxing Club in Los Angeles on Wednesday. Pacquiao is in the final stretches of his training for his Nov. 14 fight against Miguel Cotto in Las Vegas. (See related story on Page A21.)

AFP

Manny eyes history again with 7th title

LOS ANGELES—TO POUND-FOR-POUND king Manny Pacquiao, size really doesn't matter.

The Filipino boxing hero, gearing up for a world title clash with Puerto Rico's Miguel Cotto that could give Pacquiao yet another slice of boxing history, doesn't put much stock in those who say Cotto's superior size could prove too much.

"I have heard that a couple of times the past two years," Pacquiao said with a smile on Wednesday as reporters, photographers and TV cameramen jammed Hollywood's Wild Card boxing club to see him train.

After all, Pacquiao's most recent victories have come against bigger opponents.

Admittedly Oscar De La Hoya was past his prime when Pacquiao stopped him in the eighth round in December of 2008.

On May 2, Pacquiao knocked out Britain's Ricky Hatton in the second round of their junior welterweight clash.

"It's not about comparing size, nor about comparing power," Pacquiao insisted. "Knowledge is power. You don't have knowledge, you don't have power."

Pacquiao handed Hatton his first defeat at junior welterweight. He claimed

PAWWE/ A23

Jalosjos seeking absolute pardon

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

FORMER LAWMAKER ROMEO Jalosjos has asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to grant him an absolute pardon to allow him to again run for public office 12 years after he was convicted of raping an 11-year-old girl.

Although convicted of child rape by the Makati Regional Trial Court in December 1997 and sentenced to two life terms, the former representative of Zamboanga del Norte managed to seek and win reelection in 1998 and 2001 even while behind bars.

He was only dropped from the rolls of the House of Representatives when the Supreme Court affirmed his guilt in 2002.

In June 2007, Ms Arroyo commuted Jalosjos' sentence to 16 years, three months and three days. This, along with se

PARDON/ A19

Pangilinan matches Sy offer for Meralco

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GROUP OF MANUEL V. Pangilinan has moved to defend its interest as the single biggest voting block in power retailer Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) by matching a buyout offer made by a son of tycoon Henry Sy to the Lopez family.

In a statement last night, the Lopezes' First Philippine Holdings Corp. (FPH) said the Pangilinan-led Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) had

PANGILINAN/ A1

MILF won't produce rebel leader

HOLDING COURT President Arroyo listens to government officials discuss the problem of a clean water supply during Wednesday's meeting in Marawi City. With the President are Garacad Mayor Baguia A. Macapodi, Gov. Mamintal Bobbit Adiong, ARMM Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan and Rep. Faysah Dimaporo. CEN

By Joaffrey Maitem
Inquirer Mindanao

COTABATO CITY—AN IMPASSE is taking shape between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), with the latter rejecting a challenge to produce the rebel commander earlier accused by Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno of involvement in the abduction of Fr. Michael Sinnott.

On the phone yesterday with the Inquirer, MILF chief negotiator Mohagher Iqbal said there was no mechanism under the peace talks between the government and the separatist group for the latter to produce Khay Al Ashraf or others among its men accused of criminal activities.

"It's complicated. He might be arrested if he shows up before the [Zamboanga del Sur] Crisis Management Committee. Besides, Puno had said the government is contemplating filing charges against Al Ashraf," Iqbal said, adding:

MILF POINT/ A4

Strange bedfellows in 2010 Senate race

By Michael Lim Ubac

FORGET ABOUT AFFILIATIONS; today's political parties represent the colors of the rainbow.

Seven months before the 2010 elections, those aspiring to land in the Senate's Magic 12 have embarked around ideologies and ideals, hatching once-parties with perceived chances of winning.

The Nacionalista Party (NP) of Sen. Manuel Villar has five names on its list—endorsement Sen. Pia Cayetano, detained Col. Ariel Querubin, lawyer Adel Tamano, former opposition Rep. Gilbert Remulla and Bayan Mu on Rep. Satur Ocampo.

Remulla, the NP spokesperson, said getting senatorial as

STRANGE/ A17

GMA for veep? Yes, says close Palace ally

By Leila B. Salaverria

AN ALLY OF PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo has broached an idea that would ensure she is out of Malacañang by June next year but keep her close enough to the Palace to make her critics still nervous.

Diokno Rep. Danilo Suarez yesterday

GMA FOR VEEP?/ A19

WEATHER FORECAST

Second
FRONTPAGE

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SUPERLOTTO 6/49 3 5 16 30 36 46 P22,602,250.80

RP getting all of US aid–Teodoro

DEFENSE SECRETARY GILBERT TEODORO JR. and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) have disputed a claim made by a party-list representative that the United States has decided to withhold $2 million in military aid to the Philippines next year because of the local military's alleged involvement in human rights violations.

Teodoro said that, if anything, the US had committed to double its military assistance to the country, as it recognized that the government and the military had taken the necessary steps to curb human rights violations.

He said he was basing this on his last conversation with US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, chair of the US Senate appropriations committee, who vowed to increase foreign military assistance to the Philippines to around $40 million.

Teodoro was reacting to the statement of Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño who said the Philippines stood to lose $2 million in US military assistance next year, in addition to $2 million withheld this year, because of human rights concerns.

Colmenares, who visited the US in October, said he was informed by Raymond Burkhart, deputy director of the Office of Maritime Southeast Asian Affairs of the Department of State, that $2 million in US military aid would not be released to the Philippines next year since there is concern but not "overwhelming."

Colmenares said this was because of US House Resolution 3061 passed in July that stipulates that $2 million out of military aid for 2010 would not be released unless the Secretary of State reports in writing to the US Congress that the Philippines had taken steps to address the report on extrajudicial killings of Philip Alston, the United Nations rapporteur on human rights.

According to Colmenares, Burkhart told him the state department had been unable to make that report to the US Congress.

Colmenares said it was these same reasons that led to the non-release this year of $2 million in US military aid to the Philippines.

Teodoro said his office had not received any official communication from the state department on the matter.

"That is entirely upon the discretion of US officials and it's their judgment that counts here," he said.

"But we continue our operations based on our own military professionalism and criteria system," he said.

In a statement, the DFA said that withholding of a $2-million portion of US foreign military assistance to the Philippines was "not a new development."

DFA spokesperson Ed Malaya explained that it was a continuation of a conditionality tacked on last year, that is, the condition attached to that portion of the aid package had been carried over to the succeeding year. By analysis B. Ty and Leila B. Salaverria

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New raps filed vs Legacy officers

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice (DOJ) has filed another round of complaint of syndicated estafa against banker Celso de los Angeles Jr. and five other executives of the Legacy group of companies, this time for allegedly defrauding a woman of her P5-million investment in an oil-and-land plan.

DOJ prosecutors filed the charges Friday against De los Angeles, Cavaliers Hotels, Manoamas Pension, Arjad and Soledad Sulpicians, and Elden Nebre in the Makati Regional Trial Court.

De los Angeles allegedly diverted the money collected in a "double-your-money" scheme offered to investors, including complainant Josephine Soriano.

The new case's claim anybody at Legacy ... could stop the illegal scheme of respondent Celso (De los Angeles) as the time. What became illegal were not the products offered ... but the diversion of the proceeds from the side of the proponent," the panel said.

Soriano said she was enticed by one of the defendants to invest in an educational plan for her daughter's high school and college education.

After fully paying for three plans, she was convinced to transfer another investment totaling P5 million with the promise of doubling her money in three years.

The checks issued ... were deposited and encashed. Jhesa Z. Pena-Bagaoisan

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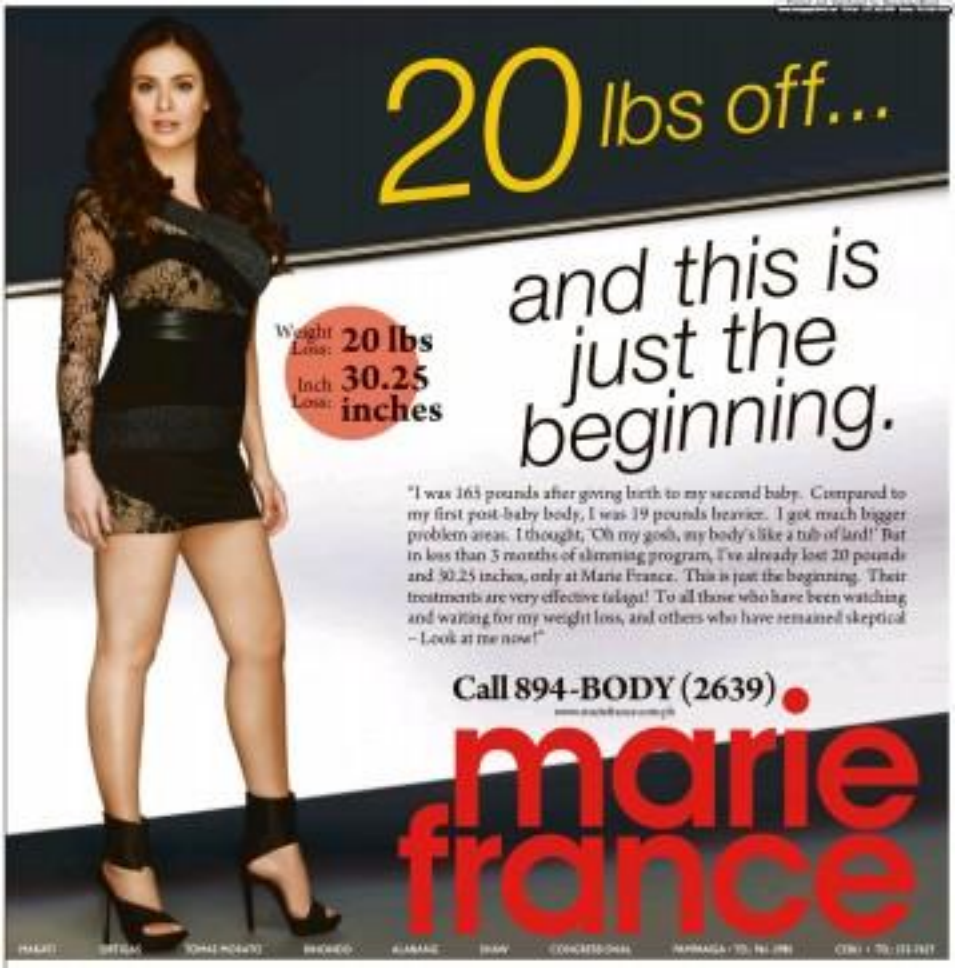

Shape up to *body beautiful*

"When I told the world to watch me get my figure back after my second pregnancy, I was really confident that I could do it again."

In just less than 3 months of slimming program – the results: 20 pounds and 30.25 inches off her body. And this is only the beginning. Actress Dawn Zulueta-Lagdameo is so back after another triumph over post-pregnancy weight gain.

"I was 165 pounds after giving birth to my second baby. Compared to my first post-baby body, I was 19 pounds heavier. But even then, I could already foresee that my weight loss would be manageable. All because of Marie France," Dawn says.

Last June 23, 2009, Dawn gave birth to her second baby Ayesha Madlen. A week after she was the talk of the town when her billboard for Marie France was posted with the tagline "I'll get my figure back again. Watch me!"

Determined and persistent to lose weight, Dawn got fast results at Marie France. "First week pa lang, I've lost 5 pounds na! I couldn't believe it," Dawn says.

But as she continued her treatments, a big problem arose. "With a wider range of treatments, I was so sure Marie France can help me. But I got a condition that I've been trying and hoping to get out of. It's residual from my post-partum – my gestational diabetes. Gestational diabetes was giving me a harder time to lose weight because the sugar accumulated in my body attracted water, which also attracted fat. That's why I've got water retention. So if I do the treatments for lymphatic drainage or lose water retention today, I'll regain it 24 hours after. To me, it seemed that my body was betraying me. It was **very** frustrating," Dawn says.

Some research studies have shown that gestational diabetes affects 4% of all pregnant women. Gestational diabetes starts during pregnancy when the body isn't able to make or use all the insulin it needs for pregnancy. This type of diabetes can cause difficulties in losing weight and even obesity.

Dawn could have easily quit. But she didn't. "What kept me going? It's really my kids. It's really the fact that I couldn't play with my son the way I used to. I couldn't even carry him up kasi I go with my own weight; my knees hurt, and I had a hard time moving around. Now my incentive is to normalize my family life," she shares.

The rising new Dawn

Experts reveal that with proper diet and exercise, a typical individual can usually lose just 2-5 pounds per month. And if a mother wouldn't be able to lose the excess weight in the first three months after giving birth, chances are, it will take 2-3 years longer. It's because once pre-existing fats have deposited in your fatty areas, it's harder to lose them.

But with Marie France as a partner, Dawn has lost weight faster as her body started to function normally.

"30 pounds and 30.25 inches off in less than 3 months – what a fabulous start! I have curves again – a shapelier waist, reduced saddlebags and trimmer thighs. I love my slimmer body now because I'm much more confident, and I can look at myself in the mirror again," Dawn shares as she adds, "People say 'Pampapayat ka na!' Sobrang sipag mo para dun ah."

For Dawn, only Marie France can make post-pregnancy weight loss – fast, safe and easy. "I can only credit the Marie France treatments talaga. I feel so grateful that I'm undergoing these treatments. For the second time, Marie France has proven that it will not fail me!"

Like Dawn, you can slim down – fast and easy only at Marie France! Call now at **894-BODY (2639), Cebu (032) 233-7637** and **Pampanga (045) 961-2981** for a FREE consultation.

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No 'midnight sale' but gov't selling assets

From page A1

with its pluses in section this month P300-million swath of property recovered from the Marcoses and their cronies.

PCGG Commissioner Narciso Abcede said Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. had nothing to worry about because the sale of the assets would go through a thorough review process.

"There is no midnight sale or fire sale of government assets and the senator may hit the bed and sleep well. It takes us unusually long time to sell government properties," Abcede said in a press conference.

Pimentel on Monday said that the privatization could favor the campaign war chest of the administration for the 2004 general elections.

He specifically questioned Malacañang's inclusion of the government-owned prime property in Tokyo's Fuji district, which houses the residence of the Philippine ambassador to Japan. The government could earn P3 billion from the property, according to the finance department.

The senator said the Arroyo administration had been selling all kinds of assets from buildings in Davao and Morales to military camps or reservations without regard to their strategic importance to make up for its shortfall in tax collections.

Abcede disputed Pimentel's claim that the administration was selling government assets to fund its war chest for the elections.

"There is no truth to the tale that we are incurring these up for the elections. We don't factor that in. We look at these scientifically," he said.

Baclaran property

Among the PCGG assets to be sold are the RC Maquilad property on Roxas Boulevard in Baclaran, Parañaque (worth P279,822 million), a radio station in Naga valued at P39 million, and a radio station in Iligan City worth P17.8 million. These will be bid out on Nov. 26.

Created in 1986 by President Corazon Aquino, the PCGG is tasked with recovering the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and their cronies.

"The road to selling government assets is long, tedious and at times even exasperating one. There is simply no shortcuts that allow selling in haste," Abcede said.

He said that before a government-owned property could be offered for sale, it must handle legal questions of ownership.

"The government must prove it still is for the absolute owners and not prevented by law or pending litigation from selling," he said.

Abcede said the properties should also be appraised by at least two independent appraisers "and it is not unusual for these appraisers to come out with wildly divergent appraised values."

All the details of any proposed sales in "extraordinary circumstances" like emergency such as of a committee of the Privatization Management Office, he said.

"If the committee approves the transaction, it will then have to go up to the Privatization council for final review and approval," Abcede said.

He said the privatization council was made up of Cabinet-level officials.

"Not adequately a proposal to sell is sent back to the technical committee for further vetting, or else altogether thumbed down," he said.

Cost-benefit analysis

Abcede said the government was also conducting a cost-benefit analysis of assets that provide public services, like the National Center for Mental Health in Mandaluyong City to determine if these should be sold.

Abcede was reacting to Pimentel's statements that the impending transfers of the National Center for Mental Health and the Welfareville or Bicas Town in Mandaluyong City, the land of the national penitentiary in Muntinlupa City, the Home for the Aged in Quezon City and Philippine Postal City, were being sold in complete disregard of their importance in providing vital social services.

Protest in Tokyo

In Tokyo, a network of Filipino and Japanese organizations and individuals called on the Philippine government to stop a reported plan to sell the Philippine embassy property in Japan.

Members of the Save Fujisa Property International Network held a protest on Nov. 2 at the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo to appeal for the preservation of the shared cultural and historical rights of the Filipino and Japanese people.

The activity coincided with the arrival in Tokyo of Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, whom the protesters also met.

Gene Romero, the network's coordinator and concise director of the Center for Japanese-Filipino Studies, described as "highly suspect" the plans to develop the property.

He said the group had heard that the Department of Finance had invited bidders to develop the area.

"The Arroyo administration, whose term will end in seven months, has been implicated in various high-profile corruption cases. We're concerned that many doubts exist about the real intents behind this move to transact on the Fujisa ambassadorial residence," Romero said in a statement sent from Tokyo.

Public hearing

The protesters demanded that "any major decisions related to historic Filipino-owned property must be done with full public hearing, both in the Philippines and Japan, backed up by thorough studies and with utmost transparency."

"We are appealing to preserve the shared cultural and historical rights of the Filipino and Japanese people," read the protesters said in a letter addressed to Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago, chair of the Senate's foreign relations committee.

Upscale site

The property, located in Tokyo's Chiyoda special ward, is one of the most upscale real estate sites in Tokyo.

The 12-square kilometer Chiyoda contains the Imperial Palace; national government buildings such as the Diet, prime minister's residence and the Supreme Court; and 11 foreign embassies, including the Philippines.

Purchased in 1944 by the Philippine government, the property has a 1932 mailer from the Philippine National Historical Institute certifying that the structure was built during the so-called Shōwa era or Edo period (1603-1868) of Japan, which ruled the East Asian country's nearly modern history.

Santoyo and Cayetano had vowed to block the midnight sale of the property, adding that when the house resumes in session on Nov. 9, he and other senators would scrutinize the matter.

"We will heighten our present actions to frustrate this wrong-even attempt in stealing away the shared cultural and historical heritage of peoples of the Philippines and Japan. Ms Arroyo and the bidders will bear the high cost of political, legal and economic questions from their actions," said Nilo Tayag, one of the group's leaders.

Signature campaign

The group held another protest in front of the embassy at 4 p.m. yesterday, followed by signature signing in train stations around Tokyo, Saitama, Nagoya, Kyoto, and Osaka, to be conducted by the members of the network.

Among those who have signed the petition were Rev. Tashihisa Ina of the Japanese Christian Council of Japan's Philippine committee, professor Tomoko Kawa of International Christian University, Philippine Women's Center chair Yuko Takei, Hong Women's Catholic Association-Kyoto junior secretary Chie Tomimoto, and members of the United Japanese-Filipino Children.

In the Philippines, the signatories include National Artist and Ramon Magsaysay awardee Bienvenido Lumbera, and lawyers of the Philippine College of Man Commentator Jesus De Roland Tolentino.

Photos by Raneh Cortez

Hunger chooses no one. But you can choose to help stop it.

Ending hunger is your choice to make. The Accelerated Hunger-Mitigation Program provides means for millions of Filipinos to improve their lives. Here are some ways you can help out:

- Hold more feeding programs.
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- Educate people on how to produce and market food.
- Provide employment to the poor.

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Rev. DUGUE
Lead, Anti-Hunger Task Force

No typhoon but expect rain, says weather bureau

By Alexis Papa and Jerome Aning

THE COUNTRY MAY BE ENJOYING A respite from devastating typhoons, but it may be rainy for Metro Manila, parts of Luzon and the Visayas through the weekend.

The northeast monsoon is the reason for the rainy weather, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

Fourteen flights in and from the Cagayan Valley and Tacloban City were canceled as the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday because of bad weather caused by the northeast monsoon.

The northeast monsoon refers to the cold seasonal winds blowing in from the northern hemisphere beginning October or November and ending in March.

"The rainshowers we are getting is the result of the northeast monsoon. There is no tropical cyclone affecting the country," said weather forecaster Joel Jesena.

In the latest weather update, Pagasa said Central and southern Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms.

These conditions could develop into widespread rain over the eastern sections of these areas which may trigger flashfloods and landslides, Pagasa said.

Metro Manila, Subic, Clark and Tagaytay will have cloudy skies with rainshowers on Friday and partly cloudy skies so as otherwise with isolated rainshowers from Saturday to Monday, Pagasa said.

Temperatures in Metro Manila will range from 22 degrees to 32 degrees Celsius.

The waters of Manila Bay will be moderate to rough, the weather bureau said.

Tagaytay, Laoag and Baguio will have partly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers. Forecast temperatures for Baguio will range from 15 degrees to 24 degrees Celsius.

Legazpi City will have cloudy weather with rainshowers and thunderstorms from Friday to Saturday.

Iloilo City, Metro Cebu and Tacloban City will also have cloudy weather with rainshowers on Friday and mostly cloudy weather with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms on Saturday and Sunday.

Cagayan de Oro, Metro Davao and Zamboanga City will have mostly cloudy weather with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms until the weekend.

Pagasa warned residents living in the coastal areas of northern, Central and southern Luzon against big waves because of strong to gale-force winds associated with the northeast monsoon.

In an advisory at 5:00 p.m. yesterday, the Manila International Airport Authority said two Cebu Pacific flights to Tuguegarao, Cagayan, and another flight to Casiguran, Isabela, were canceled. Consequently, the return trips to Manila from those planes were also canceled.

International flights were also affected. At Terminal 1, the arrival of a Royal Dutch Airlines flight from Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and a China Airlines flight from Kaohsiung, Taiwan, were delayed by almost three hours.

AdBoard to help typhoon victims

BAGUIO CITY—THE PHILIPPINE ADVERtising Board will donate all proceeds of the Philippine Advertising Congress (PAC) to be held here this month at the Subic Bay Freeport to typhoon victims in Baguio and Benguet.

The AdBoard moved the congress venue from Baguio to Subic after heavy rains damaged by Tropical Storm "Pepeng" induced landslides and floods that damaged roads leading to the summer capital.

Instead of organizing to keep the congress here, Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr. said he asked for some of the event's profits to be given to Benguet.

He said the disaster here Benguet the most, citing the damage the rains and landslides brought to the vegetable and cut-flower industries.

Neighboring La Trinidad town had the most fatalities among towns hit by Pepeng, he said.

"I did not expect all the profits to be sent this way," he said in a Thursday news conference.

The AdBoard's website for the 21st PAC said the donation represents "100 percent of the Araw Awards Night ticket proceeds as the PACs donation to [the Philippine National] Red Cross-Baguio Chapter for the recovery of Benguet."

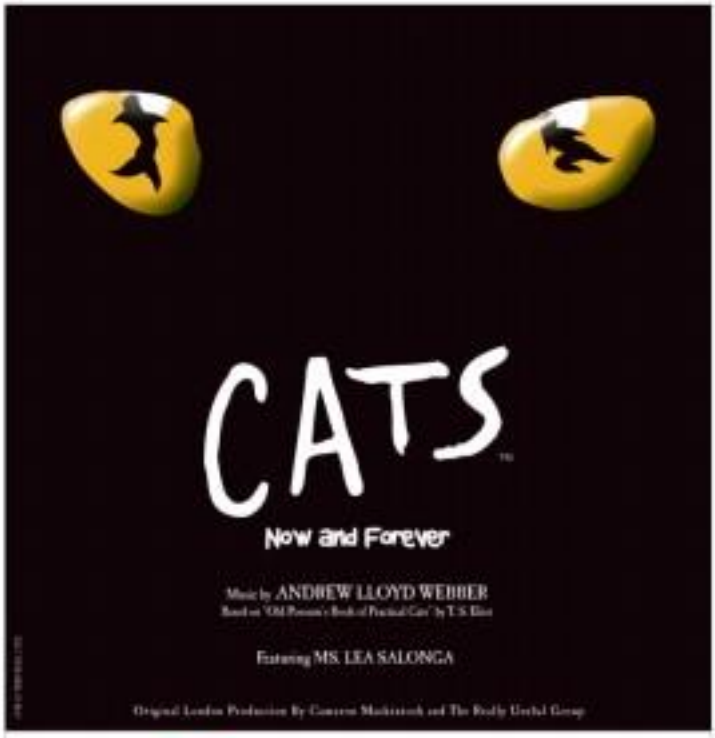
Bautista said Subicnon officials would be sending the proceeds to the city on Nov. 20.

The AdBoard also asked Bautista to attend the Ad Congress opening on Nov. 16.

"In the opening ceremonies, the mayor will...lead a traditional Cagayan prayer for the opening invocation that will be followed by a dance number by the Araw of Subic and Igorota of Ube Cordillera," the congress website said.

"I was asked to formally welcome the delegates. It's Baguio going to Subic. It was a concession. It sends the signal that this is still the ad. Congress in Baguio which would be staged outside Baguio," Bautista said.

He said the city will still have the 60th Pines Golf Tournament, as well as the annual conventions of civil engineers and other safety advocates. Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon



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citi

More families rate themselves poor, survey shows

MORE THAN HALF OF THE TOTAL number of Filipino families consider themselves poor, while two in every five say they are "food-poor," according to the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey.

The first category refers to general poverty while the second means there is not enough food to eat.

The SWS 2009 3rd quarter survey—conducted from Sept. 18 to 22 and released yesterday—found that 53 percent of household heads, representing about 9.7 million families, considered themselves poor.

Twenty-eight percent claimed themselves on the borderline, and 20 percent said they did not consider themselves poor.

SWS said the new self-rated poverty rate was three points up from the 50 percent (9.3 million families) that considered themselves poor in the previous June survey.

"It has been at levels of 50 percent and above since March 2008, except in February 2009 when it was at 47 percent," SWS said.

In terms of self-rated food poverty, 41 percent of families, or 7.5 million, said they were food-poor, 30 percent put themselves on the borderline, and 29 percent considered themselves not food-poor.

SWS said the self-rated food poverty rate "has steadily risen from 36 percent in February 39 percent in June, and 44 percent in September 2009 after declining from 43 percent in December 2008."

Self-rated poverty declined by five points in Mindanao. From 62 percent in June to 57 percent in September.

It rose by seven points in the rest of the rest of Luzon (44 percent to 51 percent), and by four points in the Visayas (36 percent to 40 percent). It barely changed in Metro Manila (42 percent to 41 percent).

In the urban areas, self-rated poverty rose slightly by two points, from 44 percent to 46 percent, and by one point in rural areas, from 58 percent to 59 percent.

Self-rated food poverty also declined in Mindanao by four points, from 37 percent in June to 33 percent in September.

It rose by six points in the Visayas (42 percent to 48 percent) and by three points in both Metro Manila (32 percent to 35 percent) and Balance Luzon (38 percent to 38 percent).

SWS said the self-rated poverty threshold—or the monthly budget that a poor household would need in order not to rate itself as being poor in general—remained "sluggish" for several years despite inflation, an indication that poor families are tightening their belts.

As of September, the median poverty threshold for poor households rose to P13,000 in Metro Manila, and to P10,000 in Balance Luzon.

These figures were marked several times in the past in these regions, SWS noted.

The median poverty threshold of poor households stayed at P5,000 for Mindanao, and declined from P8,000 to P5,000 in the Visayas. Both regions' thresholds had already reached P10,000 in the past.

Considering the inflation, Metro Manila's median poverty threshold of P15,389 was equivalent to only P9,336 in terms of purchasing power in 2000, the base year, SWS has estimated.

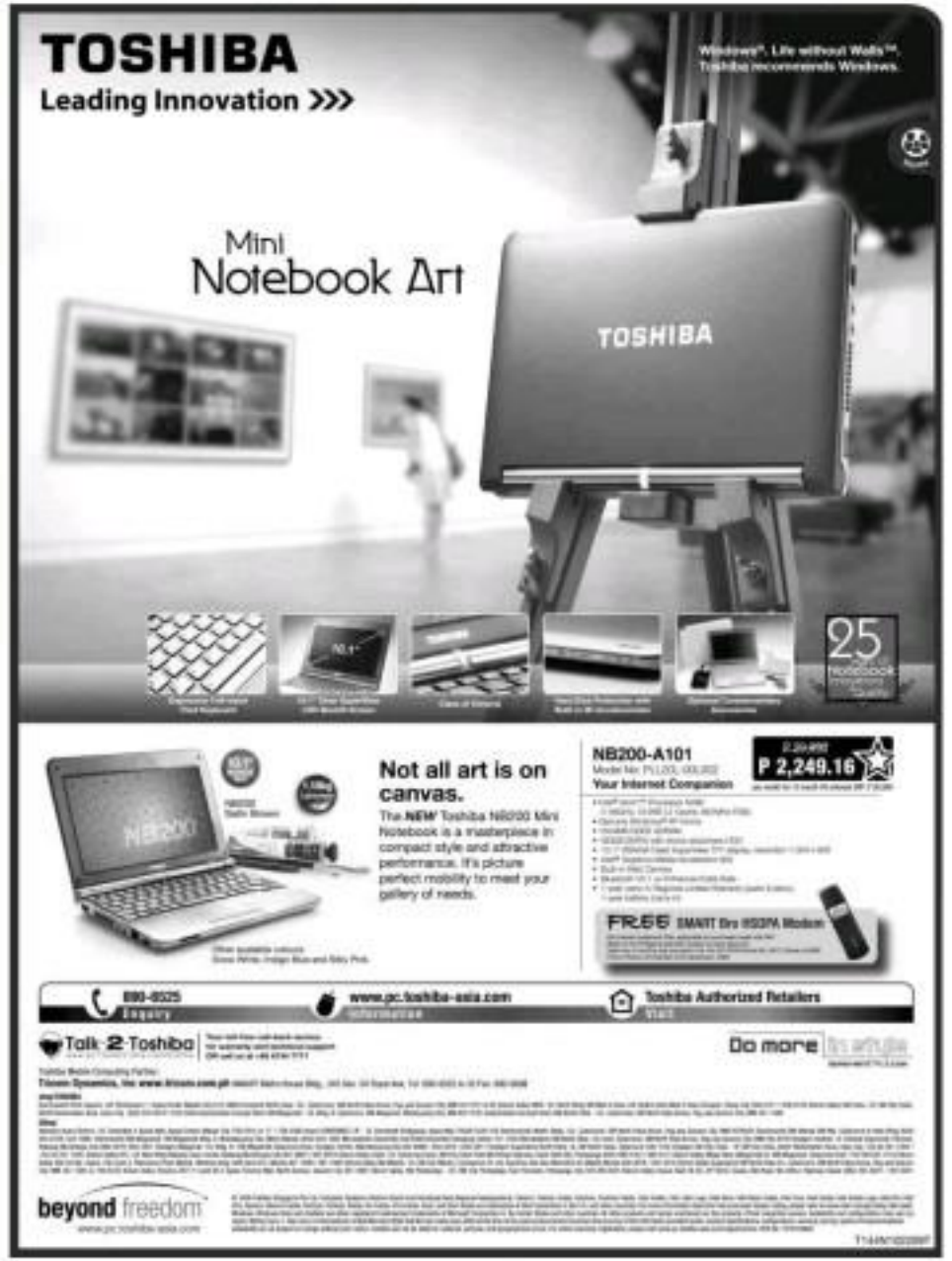
The median food-poverty thresholds for poor households increased in Metro Manila (From P5,000 to P6,500) and in Balance Luzon (From P5,000 to P5,000).

It stood at P5,000 in both the Visayas and Mindanao. These levels had already been reached several years ago, SWS said.

SWS estimated that the median food poverty threshold of P6,500 in Metro Manila was equivalent to only P4,257 in 2000 in terms of purchasing power for food.

The survey was conducted using face-to-face interviews with 1,800 adults divided into random samples of 300 each in Metro Manila and Mindanao, and 600 each in the rest of Luzon and in the Visayas.

It had a margin of error of plus-or-minus 2.3 percentage points for national percentages, plus-or-minus six percentage points in Metro Manila and Mindanao, and plus-or-minus four percentage points for Balance Luzon and the Visayas. Ellen Tordesillas, Inquirer Research



Bare nominees, Comelec tells party-list groups

PARTY-LIST GROUPS SEEKING TO PARticipate in the 2010 elections should be prepared to make public the names of their nominees, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) said yesterday.

Noting that it is the parties, and not individual candidates, that are being voted on, Comelec Chair Jose Melo said the people are entitled to know who the party-list nominees are.

The nominees might not even belong to the sector that the party-list group purports to represent, he said.

Otherwise, the poll body would itself reveal the names of the nominees, Melo said.

According to Comelec Resolution 8601, dated Nov. 3 but issued only yesterday, the list of nominees should be submitted to the poll body no later than March 26, 2010. Each group should have no less than five nominees.

The resolution also gives party-list groups between Nov. 20 and midnight of Dec. 1 to file their "manifestation of intent to participate" in the 2010 polls.

Although he did not say when the list of nominees would be made public, Melo said the Comelec would make sure that there would be ample time for the public and other groups to scrutinize the list.

"We will see how we can make it mandatory for the party-list groups to come out with the names of their nominees in public. We are looking at limiting to nineteen(sic) nominees," Melo said.

In the 2007 elections, it took a ruling from the Supreme Court to compel the Comelec to release the names of the party-list nominees, which was done just 13 days before election day.

Party-list groups critical of the Arroyo administration had claimed that about a dozen of the accredited groups were "Malacañang fronts" that allegedly received funds from the government, as were fielding nominees who were government officials appointed by the President.

According to Resolution 8601, a party-list nominee should be a natural-born citizen of the Philippines; a registered voter; a resident of the country for a period of not less than one year; able to read and write; and a bona fide member for at least 90 days before election day of the party or organization which he seeks to represent.

The nominee must also be at least 25 years old on the day of the election. He or she should belong to the marginalized and underrepresented sectors, the organizations, organization, political party or coalition he seeks to represent, and is able to contribute to the formulation and enactment of appropriate legislation that would benefit the nation as a whole.

More than 300 groups have filed for party-list accreditation. These names are still being heard by the two divisions of the commission. Some 25 groups that were earlier delisted by the Comelec also have pending motions for reconsideration.

The Constitution sets aside 20 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives for party-list groups. Jerome Aning

Corrections

IN THE OCT. 28 ISSUE, a picture on Page A22 showing newlyweds Mar Roxas and Korina Sanchez beside a pothole carried the wrong photo credit. The photo was taken by Jim Geiac Pomarlan.—CARLOS H. CONDE

IN THE NOV. 3 ISSUE, an article on Page B8—"Electric failsafe myths create needless havoc"—misspelled the first name of a lawyer. The lawyer's name is Evelyn—not Evelyn—Ortiz.

IN THE NOV. 5 ISSUE, the banner story of the Second Front Page carried an erroneous headline. The headline should have read: "Heroic shipment foiled, mole rescued"—not "Heroine shipment foiled, mole rescued."

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Residents flee amid reports of Moro rebels massing in jungle

KIDAPAWAN CITY—THE RESIdents of two barangays in Tulunan, North Cotabato, have fled their homes because of reports that Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels were massing nearby.

Tulunan Mayor Leni Candelada said at least 37 families composed of Christian settlers and members of the B'laan tribe left their homes in Barangays Kudlung and Mantikin on Tuesday.

Candelada said barangay officials had informed her that the rebels were sighted in the jungle serving as Tulunan's boundary with Datu Paglas town in Maguindanao.

She said the residents of the two barangays had heard their decision to flee in past traumatic experiences.

In May, her residents of Kudlung and Maybula died and a number of others were wounded during an alleged MILF attack.

The rebels also allegedly torched a number of houses in the two barangays. *Willamor A. Magbuelan, Inquirer Mindanao*

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MILF refuses to produce reb leader

Front page 1 >

"Maybe we can endure loss in economic cases, like in panel to panel meetings [in the peace talks], but not before our group."

Hassan, a 70-year-old Imam priest, was abducted from the Cotabato airstrip compound in Pagalungan City on Oct. 13.

Pasco made the accusation against Al Ashwal and the MILF on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the MILF should present Al Ashwal "as a show of goodwill" and "to prove its sincerity" to offering help for the government's efforts to find and rescue Hassan.

On the same day, the MILF said Pasco's claim was "cheap propaganda" and an affront to the peace process.

Iqbal also said Al Ashwal, the head of the MILF 113th Base Command, had actually been working to have Hassan freed.

Rectify Pasco's claims

The MILF has decided to suspend its various effort pending the government's corrective action of claims that Al Ashwal was behind the kidnapping, according to its military chief Jamiry Al Bahnsoni.

"The decision is out on hold our role in the rescue mission is a difficult one to make, but we have to make it. There is no other way [It was the] L we destroy ourselves and this very principles that the MILF stands for—respect for fellow human beings and an uncompromising stance against kidnapping," the Iranun leader said.

He said Pasco's claim had given a "negative turn-out" to the MILF's rescue efforts and ... shamed the MILF before the international community, especially the United Kingdom and Ireland."

Al Bahnsoni said it was giving "one gesture in the peace process," the Aeroja administration, "up to the end of this month" to make the rectifications.

He added that Pasco's claim had "placed in bad light the very unit tasked by the MILF Central Committee to expose the peace, taking his safety in utmost consideration."

Not backing off

Pasco had said that with the purported involvement of the MILF in Hassan's abduction, the government could no longer count on its effort to help in the rescue efforts.

And he is not backing off from its claim despite Iqbal's statement on Wednesday that Malacañang was giving the MILF the benefit of the doubt and that it remained open to the latter's offer of help.

Spokesperson Robin Yamamora said Pasco's statements were backed by solid evidence gathered by a joint investigating team from the police and military on the circumstances of Hassan's abduction.

"He is standing by what he said because he has solid information from the ground," Yamamora told the Inquirer by phone.

He said that from the evidence gathered, the Department of Interior and Local Government was preparing to file cases in court against Hassan's kidnappers, but "until such time that the proper has been found."

Yamamora said that despite Ermita's claims, Pasco remained hands-on with the issue and flew to Zamboanga del Sur yesterday to preside over a meeting with the Crisis Management Committee.

Pasco is to meet them again today for another meeting with the committee, Yamamora said.

The only dissent that Pasco, who oversees the Philippine National Police, is not going sole on kidnappers, Yamamora said.

"He is just protecting the government and its interventional capabilities," Yamamora said, quickly adding:

"Whatever President Macapagal-Arroyo will order, he will comply."

Peace confident

But yesterday, Malacañang deputy spokesperson said the government had no urgent need of help from the MILF to find and rescue Hassan.

Asked if the government could recover Hassan even without MILF assistance, Lorelei Fajardo said, "We would like to believe so."

"We're confident, with the competence of our Joint Crisis Management Committee, together with our PNP and armed forces."

Still, she acknowledged that the government would "need of the help we can get to secure the release of Father Hassan."

Fajardo called on the MILF to "do something to prove that the allegations on its involvement in Hassan's abduction are not true."

She said the government's main concern was the safe release of Hassan, who has lived in the Philippines for decades, and that the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process was "working to ensure" that the peace talks would be put back on track.

"We don't want to compromise the peace efforts; at the same time, we don't want to compromise the safety of Father Hassan," Fajardo said.

Scalawags

Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis, the government's top negotiator with the separatists, said Hassan's kidnapping could be "the work of misguided scalawags," and not MILF regulars.

"I have faith and confidence in the MILF leadership's resolve to help the government in freeing Father Hassan from his abductors, whether their offer of assistance is accepted or not," he told the Inquirer.

Seguis said he strongly believed that the kidnapping was not ordered by the peace talks.

He also expressed confidence that "the formal resumption of the peace talks would proceed as we had earlier agreed," with no reports from Ghadzifar T. Ziguanian, Analyn R. Uy and Jerry E. Esplanada in Manila

Pangilinan matches ...

From page B1 >

exercised its right of first refusal and matched Henry Sy Jr.'s offer of a binding valuation of P4.00 per share.

Metrobank (MBT) has agreed to sell only 6.7 percent or half of its remaining stake in Meralco.

The deal was announced in the form of a lock and a one-year call option, which analysts said was meant to seek an exemption from a costly tender offer.

The offer of the listed Tollways Holdings Corp. (TOLL) owner and Ongpin-controlled DMCI was taken up by DBS in a meeting yesterday.

There won't be an outright transfer of shares. Instead, there will be a short-term loan of P11,130 billion by MPIC to PBH or its wholly owned subsidiaries.

The loan will be backed by a promissory note which will mature on March 31, 2010, and will have an interest of 5 percent per annum—exactly a year after Pangilinan's group through Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. first entered into a deal to buy out the Lopez family's 26 percent stake in Meralco.

The loan will be secured by the Lopezes' shares in Meralco and First Gen Corp. There will be a call option granted to MPIC by PBH via NAT unlisted common shares, 6.7 percent of the outstanding common shares of Meralco.

The transaction between MPIC and PBH follows the process in the investment and corporation agreement between the two parties signed in March.

The deal will push up the stake of the Pangilinan group to 41.4 percent if and when the call option is exercised.

Its corporate rival San Miguel Corp. remains an influential voting block in Meralco with a 27 percent stake. Global 8000 Investments Inc., an allied group led by businessman Roberto Ongpin, has voting rights equivalent to 7-10 percent.

8th
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The annual Roche Asian Oncology Forum will be held in the Philippines for the first time. Leading cancer specialists from China, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Australia and the Philippines will gather to discuss advancements in cancer care and treatment from both Asian and Western perspectives.

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The 8th Annual Roche Asian Oncology Forum (RAOF) is held in partnership with the Philippine Society of Medical Oncology.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, November 6, 2009
31st Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Rom 11:11-24
Gospel: Lk 14:1-6

Jesus told his disciples, "There was a rich man whose steward was reported to him for squandering his property. He summoned the steward and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Come give an account of your service for it is almost to be terminated.'

"The steward thought to himself, 'What shall I do because my master will take away the stewardship from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I know what I will do so that some may welcome me into their homes when I am removed from the stewardship.' He then called each one of his master's debtors to him. He asked the first one, 'How much do you owe my master?' The reply was 'A hundred jugs of oil.' He said to him, 'Here is your bill; sit down quickly and write fifty.' To the second he said, 'And you, how much do you owe?' The answer was 'A hundred bushels of wheat.' Then he said, 'Take your bill and write eighty.' And the master commended the dishonest steward for his astuteness. For the people of this world are more astute in their age with their own kind than are the people of light.

Commentary

Father of the early Church thought they should be marked through their acts—by signs and wonders. Or through their sins. By martyrdom or by sin. Origen, for example, was a martyr in the sense that he suffered much for his faith. Another does not die of violence but by his own hand. Both are martyrs to God's will. A life marked by sanctity, to inspire people, fully to be faithful to God's will. Our lives must always bring people knowledge of God and closer to Christ. Before our death we must live in such a way that people want, but to tell people to do what God wants. To follow God.

Paul always used his words. Wisdom and foolishness, to instill and weakness. What the world thinks is wisdom and strength, God disagrees. The early Church did not have much to boast about in the world. Neither does any one of us have anything to boast about before God. We are simply weak and frail. But that's not a problem for God, until it doesn't mean we are without hope. God deliberately chooses us who are weak. To choose who proclaim!

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It's possible NPC won't have top bet

THE NATIONALIST PEOPLE'S COALITION (NPC) could be heading into the May 2010 elections without a standard-bearer and with members free to back whomever they want from other parties.

That is if the proposal made by NPC members, former Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III, is adopted either by the party's executive committee or national membership next week.

Sotto has proposed that the NPC cross-dermal nomination for left vacant with party members free to support any other cross-dermal candidate. The members, however, must support every NPC candidate running for other positions—from vice president to the last councilor.

Sotto formally made the proposal to NPC chair emeritus Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, who received it yesterday as part of congressional efforts to chart a party course in the wake of the departures of its presumptive presidential candidate, Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero.

"The presidency will be a love zone," Sotto told the business.

"This proposal is intended mainly to preserve party unity," Sotto, chair of the Commission on Higher Education, added. "It's the old NPC way and it's truly democratic."

The NPC suddenly found itself without a presidential candidate after Escudero left the party that had been grooming him to be its candidate more than a week ago (reported by Cojuangco's lack of commitment to him).

NPC vice presidential candidate Sen. Loren Legarda was left to consider the rest of the presidential candidates of other parties, among them, the administration's Lakas-Kampi-CMD and the Nacionalista Party of Sen. Manny Villar. (Christian S. Esguerra)

Palace clams up on GMA house

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's spokesperson, Palace officials have turned mute on only one hot political issue but also about the ownership of a house in Loboc, Pampanga, that has further fueled speculation she is keen on running for Congress representing the district in which the house is located.

It's true that when she is in Loboc, she sometimes stays in that house," was all Undersecretary Lorelei Fajardo, deputy presidential spokesperson, would tell reporters in a briefing.

Fajardo refused to answer further questions about the 600-square-meter single-storey house in Barangay San Nicolas 1, saying they would best be answered by Ms. Arroyo's lawyer, Sen. Romulo.

Romulo, however, could not be reached for comment.

Yesterday, Fajardo also skirted questions about the President's political plans and referred the media instead to her election lawyer, Romulo Macalintal.

"We have to refer it to Macalintal. We refuse to comment regarding political plans," Fajardo said.

"It's too personal. We've not discussed anything about that. It's very hard to second guess," she added, when asked when Mrs Arroyo would come clean about her plans.

Macalintal also could not be reached for comment.

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Jalosjos seeking absolute pardon

Pronouncement

called good conduct time allowance, allowed him to walk free for good despite having served only 12 years.

A check with the Board of Pardons and Parole (BPP) yesterday showed that the child rapist applied for an absolute pardon on Sept. 15, or one month before the Oct. 1 deadline for the filing of certificates of candidacy for the May 2010 national elections. (The original deadline was Sept. 30.)

It is deemed that an absolute pardon from the President would restore Jalosjos' political rights including his right of suffrage (the right to vote and be voted upon), which he lost when the Supreme Court affirmed his conviction. (See *In the Know* on this page.)

Under evaluation

The Office of the President "endorsed" or transmitted Jalosjos' application to the BPP on Oct. 21 for evaluation and recommendation as to his eligibility for pardon.

The application officially landed on the BPP desk on Dec. 30.

When reached by phone, BPP Administrator Ismael Hernaez denied rumors that Malacañang had granted Jalosjos absolute pardon.

Hernaez also said Malacañang had no favorable or unfavorable comment on Jalosjos' application.

"It is under evaluation and further study by the board," he said.

An agency under the Department of Justice, the BPP serves as a recommendatory body to the President in granting executive clemency or pardon to prisoners other than those entitled to grants.

It is within the President's power to grant a pardon or absolute pardon without seeking the opinions of the BPP, or what she did when she pardoned ousted President and plunder convict Joseph Estrada, explained a BPP official who asked not to be named for lack of authorization to speak publicly on the matter.

Sure he'd win

But the fact that Malacañang transmitted Jalosjos' application to the BPP means that the rape convict would have to go through the guidelines and requirements of the board in determining his eligibility for pardon, the official said.

IN THE KNOW

A PRESIDENTIAL PARDON DOES not necessarily restore a convicted person's rights to vote and to hold public office, according to the Revised Penal Code.

Article 36 of the law states that those political rights shall be restored only if the terms of the pardon expressly say so.

A presidential pardon sends penitentiaries to a person convicted by final judgment. It confuses infractions of the peace of the state.

But it does not exempt the person from payment of the civil indemnity imposed by the sentence.

The Philippine penal code states that convictions by final judgment entails "imposition from public office and the right to vote and be voted for."

Twice winner

Romeo Jalosjos...also was sentenced in 1997 to two life terms for statutory rape and an additional eight to 23 years for each of the six counts of acts of lasciviousness committed against an 11-year-old girl in 1996—was twice able to run for public office while in prison because he had yet to be convicted with finality by the Supreme Court at the time.

Jalosjos won as representative of Zamboanga del Norte in 1998. The Department of Justice allowed him to take his oath of office in prison, but the Commission on Elections ruled that he could not attend sessions of the House of Representatives.

He was reelected in 2001, but was dropped from the list of House members in the balloting held after the Supreme Court upheld his conviction with finality.

In June 2007, Malacañang announced that President Macapagal-Arroyo had commuted Jalosjos' prison term to 16 years, three months and three days.

The commutation order was signed on April 30, 2007, and received by the New Bilibid Prisons (NBP) in Muntinlupa City a month later.

Computations by penitentiary officials showed that Jalosjos could be released on Dec. 26, 2007.

GMA agent

On that day, however, an "agent" Ma Arroyo ordered then Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez to tell NBP officials that Jalosjos must remain in jail.

Gonzalez told the media that the Department of Justice was still reviewing Jalosjos' case, and that based on his initial "recomputation," the man was eligible for release in April 2009.

But Jalosjos defied the Palace order and threw in freedom on a private plane on Dec. 26, 2007. He was arrested the following morning and taken to the San Ramon Prison and Penal Farm Colony.

Crying unlawful detention, Jalosjos filed a petition for the writ of habeas corpus in the Zamboanga Regional Trial Court. The petition was denied, and he was flown back to Muntinlupa on Jan. 4, 2008.

Jalosjos was released from prison in March. Cecil Rosaleen and Elisa Victoria, Inquirer Research

Sources: Inquirer Archives, www.chanrobles.com

When interviewed last month, Jalosjos said he might run for Congress again if Ms Arroyo would grant him absolute pardon.

He said he was sure he would win again should he decide to run because he twice won even while in prison.

"How much more sure that I'm out of prison?" he said.

Jalosjos also said he planned to use former President Fidel Ramos, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona and former Supreme Court Associate Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago for purportedly besmirching his reputation.

GMA for veep? Yes, says ally

Pronouncement

suggested that Ms Arroyo run for vice president in May 2010, so that she could continue to push for the final reforms and crucial legislation that have eluded her during her current term.

"It would be best if you could continue but to run for vice president," Suarez said at the Iloilo forum. "You have a vice president with the experience and caliber of GMA, you will be no more or whoever will be the president."

Suarez, who noted a public perception that he had his sights on the seat, also asked if he had secured the endorsement of the administration's Lakas-Kampi-CMD party.

"There was no serious discussion about her running for that (vice presidency)," he said.

'Dangerous idea'

The administration party is feeling lukewarm to Secretary Gilbert Teodoro as its candidate for president but has yet to find a running mate for him.

It has been eyeing senior politicians, such as former Optical Media Board Chair Edu Manzano and Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr., as Teodoro's possible partner.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño, who was at the same Quezon City forum, said Suarez's suggestion was a "dangerous proposition."

"If the president resigns or dies, GMA would assure because it's not constitutionally disallowed for her to succeed (the president)," Casiño said.

He also noted that Ms Arroyo, who occupied the country's No. 2 post before she assumed the presidency in 2001 following the ousting of Joseph Estrada from Malacañang, is not barred from seeking a second term as vice president.

GMA mum

Suarez said that several months ago, he suggested to Ms Arroyo that she run for a seat in the House of Representatives so that she would have a chance to complete her reform agenda, including new revenue laws that impose taxes on certain items or services.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo speaks before the 2nd National ICT Summit Clark Expo 2009 at the Fontana Convention Center in Clark, Pampanga.

REP. OSMUNDO SUAREZ / Why not?

He said all that Congress had passed during her term were laws raising taxes.

"We latently discussed the possibility of her running for the House," Suarez said.

But he said Ms Arroyo made no comment on his proposal. "She just listened. She did not make any reply," he said.

Next Speaker

Ms Arroyo is rumored to be running for a congressional seat in Pampanga and his mainfrequent stops in her home province this year. (See related story on Page A8.)

Suarez said that if he lives up to and wins as a Pampanga representative, she could be the next Speaker and would make a good one.

"I can easily predict she will be the best Speaker if she would be elected congressman," he said.

He said that as Speaker, Ms Arroyo could muscle the passage of measures that would improve the country's finances. "The present House has failed to do this, succeeding only in passing negative measures, or those that cut taxes, he said.

"This may be the first time that we have a Congress that did not pass positive tax measures. It's all negative, those that reduce taxes," he said.

Pay for climate change, RP to urge rich nations

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE PHILIPPINES will be making common cause with the Group of 77 developing countries in pressuring rich nations to take responsibility for global warming and battering the implementation of climate change initiatives and adaptation measures around the world.

Secretary Heherson Alvarez, presidential adviser on global warming and climate change, has been tasked by President Macapagal-Arroyo to lead the delegation from the Philippines to the climate change summit in Copenhagen in December.

Sen. Loren Legarda will be attending the global meet, representing the Senate as chair of the climate change oversight committee and as the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) regional leader for climate change adaptation and DRR in Asia-Pacific.

Rural together

"Developing countries must band together to secure technical and financial assistance from industrialized nations," said Legarda, the author of the Climate Change Act of 2009.

Called the "15th Conference of Parties (COP-15) Under United Nations Climate Conference" slated from Dec. 7 to 18, the Copenhagen summit sets an ambitious goal of achieving a legally binding climate pact in the form of a treaty to drastically reduce carbon emissions and prevent global warming.

Immediately after signing the Climate Change Act on Oct. 23, the President ordered Alvarez to ask developed nations to reduce global carbon emissions under the Kyoto Protocol, the climate change treaty which expires in 2012.

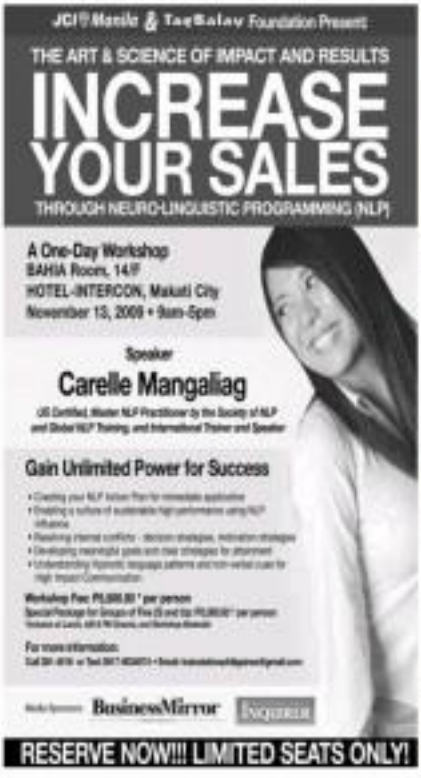
New treaty

The Kyoto Protocol set binding targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European Union to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an average of five percent against 1990 levels over the five-year period from 2008 to 2012.

The Copenhagen conference will "produce a new treaty which world leaders will turn out at the meeting."

Legarda and Alvarez will be joined by Bernardine Mellin, the leading climate change consultant of northern mayoral laws.

"Adaptation is more important to the Philippines than mitigation because we are not the major emitters of carbon," she said.



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INQUIRER

OPINION

One more week?

THE SIGHT OF SO MANY PEOPLE QUEUING UP before the offices of the Commission on Elections and failing to register is, in one and the same time, moving and pathetic. It tells us that there is no shortage of citizens who want to do the right thing; it dawned on that next year's elections have caught the imagination of the young, and that the future of the democratic project looks robust.

EDITORIAL

It also reminds us that we are our own worst enemies, that we continue to live in a culture that rewards those who procrastinate in doing things at the last minute.

In street terms, the last-minute applicants' believe or register ended in heated words, with insults and threats directed at election officials. It was, as the young themselves like to say these days, "intense."

That intensity is part of the reason why there is a chance for the Commission to extend the registration period, which ended on All Saints' weekend. Other reasons are more naive (e.g., the ideal of a perpetual registration system); others less noble (the usual political positioning). But, at the risk of being misperceived as encouraging the art of procrastination, we would like to suggest that the Comelec reconsider the issue and—if there is still time—extend the registration period, even if only for a week, or a day or two.

It bears emphasizing: The Comelec has not been remiss in its duty of promoting the election franchise. It launched a continuing registration system for new voters or transferees last December—in other words, first-time voters and those who have relocated and could no longer vote in their old precincts had 10 months in which to register. In the home stretch of the registration campaign, the Comelec added four more hours to its working day, ending at 9 p.m. to accommodate more registrants. It extended its reach by conducting registration drives in barangay halls and in malls.

It is also important to stress that the Comelec has a very tight schedule to follow, to allow it to conduct the country's first nationwide automated elections.

In the last week of registration, Comelec spokesman James Jimenez explained in clear terms exactly why the registration deadline must be met. "We need to close the list [of voters] by the end of November for the allocation of precincts. [Unless that is done,] we cannot determine the number of ballots and other supplies [to be shipped to all precincts] so we need to close on a certain day."

After the Comelec folded its tents and packed its benches, Chairman Jose Melo gave another reason why the deadline could no longer be extended. "No extension because we still have to allow time for the disqualification [process]. For one reason or another, we have to decide on the nuisance candidates within a period of one month only—from December to January."

We understand these and similar limitations on the election agency's freedom of movement; the last thing anyone would want is for automated elections to fail, or for election day to descend into chaos, because the Comelec proved slow in closing the gates on new voters. And yet, we make bold to ask: Is there really no more time to accommodate hundreds of thousands of would-be voters? We understand the case against extension. However, open-ly dyslexic in its answers, just the matter bluntly last week: "The problem is that a lot of people wait until the last minute. The reminder to register is in the news nearly every day. Why didn't they register then?"

He's right—that is the problem. But considering the fast-dimensional nature of what's at stake, it seems incumbent on all of us to offer a solution. Perhaps we can call on the Comelec, at the very least, to review the timetable and then discuss, in public, the consequences of one or two or more additional days of registration.

Tension in Jerusalem

TENSION FLARED UP AGAIN RECENTLY IN AL AQSA MOSQUE compound, in the Holy City of Jerusalem, when Israeli security forces clashed with Palestinian worshippers.

FOREIGN COMMENT

Continued Israeli reservations in and around the Old City only place a cozy adding to the tension and threaten the eruption of another bloody wave of clashes.

Under these circumstances, convening a special international conference on Jerusalem would be the right thing to do.

Indeed, the cities of the Holy City would be the best to solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. —Jordan Times (Amman, Jordan)

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Very slow wheels of justice in appellate courts

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THIS ONE IS FOR CHIEF JUSTICE REYNATO Puno of the Supreme Court and Presiding Justice Conrado M. Vasquez Jr. of the Court of Appeals. It is about the very slow wheels of justice in the appellate courts which I referred to as colonial of justice. In a classic triple-murder and incumbent murder charges against Leonis Antipardo III, now the ex-Bay Mayor of Bagumbayan.

On election night of May 8, 1995, in front of a precinct in a schoolhouse in Barangay San Isidro, Bagumbayan, Antipardo III gunned down and killed Edwin Ondo, Johnny Alcantara and Ben Magpantayan. Another victim, Jimmy de Guzman, survived.

Six years later, on May 4, 1995, Judge Thelma Asmasoe of the Manila Regional Trial Court sentenced Antipardo III on three counts of homicide and one count of frustrated murder. He appealed the decision.

Strange things began to happen in the Court of Appeals. On Jan. 23, 2002, Justice Bienvenido Reyes affirmed the lower court's decision. But five days later, Reyes recalled his decision, claiming that he was not supposed to get the decision because his job was only to complete the records and endorse the case to the justices.

The ponente was Justice Eduardo Gonzalez. For years, the case languished in the halls of Tanodbayan who, reportedly, withdrew himself from the case when the prosecution lawyers sought his substitution.

When the case was re-raffled, all the justices in whom the case was referred inhibited—Reyes, whom we have mentioned; Justices Jaime De Asis, Jose Mendoza, Tampin Abarintos, Celia Leagogo, Mario Guariña III, and Jose Reyes. Lubao refused to handle the case. It is now with Justice Jose L. Salazar.

Why is this case too hot to handle? Who is the antagonist?

Leonis Antipardo II is the son of former Mayor Leonis Antipardo Jr. and grandson of Leonis Antipardo Sr. who also served as mayor of Bagumbayan almost 30 years, the inescapable ruled this town. It was only in the elections of 2007, when the Antipardos, father and son, ran for mayor and vice mayor, respectively, that Ignacio Sanz defeated Antipardo Jr. for mayor, but the vice mayoralty seat went by Antipardo III, the accused in this case.

Sanz was suspended by the provincial Sangguniang Bayan on Antipardo III became acting mayor. Malacañang lifted the suspension order, but Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno has not implemented the Malacañang order until now.

Antipardo Jr. is in jail, charged for the killing of Lawyer Franklin Demonge and her daughter who were gunned down at the fiesta in Bacolor in August 2000. Demonge, then an opponent of Antipardo Jr., was the prosecution lawyer in the cases against Antipardo III.

It is interesting to note that the promulgation of the decision by Justice Salazar for 10 a.m. of May 6, 2003 was unexpectedly postponed although the was in her seat at that time. When the decision was handed down four hours later, Antipardo III was convicted of homicide on three counts and, strangely, of frustrated murder on one count.

Provincial issues after the crime was committed, the accused is still free and is now running the municipal government of Bagumbayan while in jail. Facts, it seems, are complicated.

On Oct. 21, 2003, Manuel T. Muñoz, lawyer of the victims, wrote to then Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. deploring the slow resolution of the case in the Court of Appeals. Davide endorsed the letter to then Presiding Justice Cancio C. Garcia.

Muñoz again wrote to Chief Justice Reynato Puno on Jan. 5, 2007 concerning the same case. Puno endorsed the letter to then CA Presiding Justice Ruben T. Reyes. On Jan. 16, 2007, Reyes informed the Chief Justice's letter to Justice Edgardo F. Sundiam. It was in Sundiam's order that the case languished for years before he finally inhibited himself from the case.

There was probably extreme pressure or blandishments on the two justices of the appellate court because all of them inhibited themselves from the case, one after another, when it was assigned to them.

Last Sept. 23, Alfredo Cani Jr., brother of Edwin Cani, one of the victims, wrote to Chief Justice Puno appealing, again, for a decision on the case. "Please call upon the Court of Appeals to expedite the resolution of this case in the interest of justice and for the peace of our family and the families of the other victims," Cani asked the Chief Justice.

Does merely evaluated the letter to Presiding Justice Vasquez who, in turn, wrote to Cani Jr. to tell him that the case was being referred to still another ponente.

Here can Puno find a credible moral reassurance moments in the Philippines when he can't even make the wheels of justice move faster in his own turf? There is no interregnum, no speed-time added on these very strange things happenings in the CA, no attempt to prod the justices to move faster.

For this is a case of justice not only being delayed but of justice being withheld because the conviction has been affirmed and is merely to be promulgated. And how can Puno have faith in our justice system when they see this bizarre denial of justice? How many more cases are languishing in our courts like this one?

There are deadlines, imposed by the Supreme Court, on lower courts to resolve cases submitted for decision. Why not on the CA? The longest delayed cases are on the two high civil courts of the land. The case against Antipardo III is only one of them.

Bishops' plea on aerial spraying

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE BISHOPS HAVE RIGHTLY OPPOSED aerial spraying in banana farms on the basis of the ancient unassailable claim of justice: "Do not do to others what you would not like to be done to you." They essentially date the banana plantation owners and foreign investors: Are you yourselves willing to be exposed to these chemicals, the same way you expose others?

Aerial spraying entails the use of low-flying air planes to destroy pesticides over the plantations, exposing the farm workers, the neighboring residents, and the entire town and down-wind communities to health hazards. Four bishops have called it "immoral" because it is "infringes upon human health and dignity." On a related matter, the bishop of Infanta, Quezon, has likewise joined hands with the Agta-Dumagat tribes and Dingalan residents to disinvest by the Ladlad Dam that lies Mapol Corp. and the MWSS propose to build in the tribe's lands.

I'm glad the bishops have chimed in on these raging social disputes, though I wonder why we wait for them. If the cloth is to speak before environmental men and women cut from the same cloth take to the streets.

But there is hope. Legazpi de Dio Ruiz, his key bodyguard has filed a bill banning Cebuana, a fungicide to detect leaf diseases but which the UN Environment Program has found to cause hazardous cancer. Sen. Jose Miguel Zubiri has proposed a total nationwide ban. Involving other substrates, Engr. Rodigal headed by Director Jonathan Arnold de Silva has asked the Supreme Court to uphold a Davao City ordinance banning aerial spraying in the city's agricultural areas. (The Court of Appeals had earlier struck down the ordinance.)

The anti-aerial spraying bishops have denounced to bring the issue "to the international markets." That's not an idle threat. It has been done before. In the late 1990s, the Swiss grocery chain Migros refused to "sacrifice dance" with, among others, Del Monte Foods International Corp., to examine the social conditions under which the pineapples were grown, with regard to labor rights, land rights, and environmental standards (in particular, waste water disposal and fertilizers and pesticides). The logic was: Before consumers are enriched to ask whether the fruits were grown hygienically—for example, far from sewer waters, without sickening fertilizers, or using toxic insecticides. Why can't they ask if the fruits were grown by underpaid and unhappy workers? If the workers are treated well and given basic benefits needed, to use an extreme example, to cancer-ously, would be lots a better knowing the fruit was harvested by farmers with issues unobtrusive by injustice? Shouldn't the bad ethos rub off on fruits who destroys off the pain of others?

Post-consumer like may have outlived "social and environmental dumping" in the "race to the bottom" for a share in global trade. What "fair trade" proposes, however, is not to kill the banana industry but to improve the conditions of work for the workers and the society markets for the producers. The celebrated norm methanone used was "social labeling" that assures the consumer that the product he is buying has been made under acceptable conditions. It empowers the consumer to vote with his pocketbook, and knowingly to pay a premium—a higher price—to support values that he has embraced. It rewards producers with price premium if they comply with basic trade standards.

Therein lies the problem with the bishops' threat to bring the issue "to the international market." Look at the market for Philippine bananas. Figures from 2002 show that we exported some 1.4 million tons of banana worth close to $300 million. We rank 4th all over the world among banana exporting countries and, in 2000, contributed almost 10 percent of the world's bananas. But our main markets are Japan (66 percent), China (32 percent), Republic of Korea (7 percent), Taiwan (6 percent) and United Arab Emirates (6 percent), South Korea and Taiwan are growing markets as well. Now let me ask you: Do you think those banana eaters will—before they take a bite—think about the banana farmers and ask if they had ingested all the pesticides?

Market-based solutions assume that consumers are ready to turn their buying power to reach immoral traders a lesson. Those solutions assume that consumers have a conscience and are prepared to act on that conscience. Of all the countries mentioned above, I would venture that Japan, Korea and Taiwan would have the strongest labor movements and so answer a market demand for "social opening free" bananas.

That is why the pending battle before the Supreme Court looms as the most real solution. Earlier this year, the Court of Appeals' Mindanao Station in Cagayan de Oro City struck down the Davao ban as "unreasonable and oppressive." One, its 3-month grace period to shift to non-aerial spraying was "impossible to comply with." All other forms of spraying would have entailed a longer transition period, it would require "substantial capital." Two, the CA struck down's ban for overbreadth, for being a "sweeping imposition against . . . all forms of substance" that extends to innocent enemies or minerals as well. Three, the 30-meter buffer zone requirement, as applied to small plantations, amounts to a taking of private property without just compensation.

The SC's past rulings disfavor such "heightened scrutiny" over mere property regulations. It reserves such searching review only for violations of civil liberties and instead applies a deferential standard. Social justice is not a constitutional mandate to those parties whom it is expected to lose. The opening has sent the day to Davao politics but sadly not to the courts, in the very sanctuary where the Constitution thought it would be safest.

State intervention in the oil market

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

EXECUTIVE ORDER 839, CLAMPING A CAP ON oil prices in the wake of the devastation we ought to "Ondoy" and "Pepeng," has sparked a rash of protests from a wide sector of the business community. It also brought to a head the conflict involving government intervention in price-setting and projected increases introduced to prevent the movements of oil products, in relation to the large-scale reconstruction of provinces hard hit by the storms, mainly on Luzon, against a succession of price increases set by the oil companies.

The government faces increasing pressure from business chambers, and the oil companies, to lift the price cap. The chambers have resorted to a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo that an injection would be forced to cut the volume of oil they import to "minimize losses," because the price of crude in the world market is now rising. They warned that continued controls could lead to the black market if supplies run low.

The issue highlighted by the controversial executive order involves not the power of government to fix prices in a time of untrained emergency and the long-term consequences on fuel supply in the country, but whether the power of the government to implement short-term measures to prevent fuel consumers against spiraling oil prices. In essence, the government is under review criteria for taking the populist option to arrest public unrest over escalating fuel prices.

In the immediate context, the President, after declaring a state of national calamity in the aftermath of the two destructive storms in October, decreed a price ceiling that reduced the prices to Dec. 15 levels. In full-page newspaper advertisements, the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Makati Business Club, and Federation of Philippine Industries listed their collective insults and gauged up against the government, warning that the executive order would result in losses on the part of the oil companies, an oil supply and severe economic loss.

The executive order re-ignited the contentious issue of state intervention in the market and the lack of competition of oil companies in opening their books to government scrutiny. It stoked the flames of economic nationalism, fanned by the Filipino First of the 1960s in which nationalist members of Congress denounced the global cartelization of the oil companies.

The Arroyo administration is encountering old arguments used by the nationalists to head off public outcry over the authorized rise of fuel prices. During widespread public protest and in recent years in response to energy, the nationalists insisted on the state's role in controlling the market and populist positions to maintain political stability and ensure regime survival.

The case for lifting the price freeze and its subsidy long-term consequences was put forward by the shareholders of corporations. "The new formal of government to raise price controls undermines the free market," the European Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines said. The Management Association of the Philippines warned: "Experience has shown that price control destroys supply, paving the way for shortages on an exception. The unavoidable response of a company that is forced to sell below cost is that it has to cut its business volume losses. And the entire chain inevitably gets entangled in, supply gradually disappears."

The issue of costs is hard to ascertain, as permanent auditors have foreclosed access to the companies' books of accounts. Politicians, including some senators, have jumped on the populist issue to win favorable points among the public.

An economic adviser of President Arroyo, Al Ferry, has been federal, declared that the administration has the authority to impose price freeze would subvert to other government tax collections, given that petroleum is the most heavily taxed and most consistent source of government revenue.

What confidentiality?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IN JUST TWO YEARS, AS TWO MEDIA ORGANIzations—the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) and Vera Files—began exposing the Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth of President Macapagal-Arroyo and members of her family, the Office of the Ombudsman issued an order "tightening rules on the release of SALNs." An assistant ombudsman would later explain that Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez's order was meant to "protect the confidentiality of SALNS" and of the officials who submitted the forms.

What confidentiality? The reason for SALN is precisely for public officials to make official and public their net worth before and during their term. It is a tool to prevent graft and corruption, to arrest openness, as well as the voting public, a means to track the wealth-generating (or losing) interests of public officials, as well as any potential source of conflict of interest or even corruption.

By nature, SALNs are public documents, and as such, in filing them, all officials, from presidents, officials are duty-bound to be accurate, truthful and comprehensive. No hedging of facts, no white lies, no cover-ups.

When the PCIJ report was released, it must be quite apparent why the Arroyo administration was suddenly so keen on public disclosure of what is the President's SALN. An analysis of the forms showed that under the years from 1992 (when Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo joined government) to 2008, the President had increased her income by a mind-boggling 3,000 percent. From an annual income of P1.4 million in 1992, her income had improved a net worth of P60.87 million in 2008 (if using which she became extremely rich presidents), and has added another P32.97 million to that since 2001, when she became president.

Her annual income, the report stated, was "at least P1.5 million, or roughly P400,000 a month." Contrary to the saying that politics and public service is the start of doing small to poverty, public service for GMA and her family has certainly turned out to be very profitable indeed.

THE INFORMATION in the Arroyos' SALNs is the

President and her two sons, Representatives Mikey and Dato; and the Ombudsman's belated attempt at a cover-up illustrate exactly what's at stake in a pending Freedom of Information Bill at the Senate.

A counterpart bill has already made it through the hurdles in the House, while the Senate version entrusts the pushed of lawmakers when Congress convenes on Monday. But with only seven session days left before they take up the budget after which the life of this Congress ends, the schedule is very tight, indeed.

Importers of the bill, sponsored in the Senate by Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano and co-sponsored by Sen. Miguel Zubiri in Antisurging 50 of his partisan encouragement), say that after the interpellations of Sen. Medardo Belisario Sanchez and Senator Lacson, only seven more days remain for the bill's sponsors and other senators, Joker Arroyo and Sotto Pimentel, have indicated their intention to raise questions on the floor.

Ryan's hoping their interventions prove brief and pithy (and constructive, based on that the Senate could pass the bill anytime soon much delay and after a brief hearing, we will finally a have a bill promoting and protecting the public's right and freedom to information.

• • •

BELEAGUERED moreover pushed by the Senate to information blowouts, a coalition of 11 NGOs and media organizations that has been for promoting have lobbying for the bill, since they the public's right to access to information is sacrosanct to the Constitution, although an enabling law has yet to be passed, setting forth such modes and the procedures to be followed.

"Citizen access to control if might will prevent misuse agencies for access to important official information," says the Network. "Key provisions such of 'right-to-know.' While the Supreme Court has upheld the enforceability of the constitutional right to information, its effective implementation has for the past two decades suffered from the lack of the necessary substantive and procedural details that only Congress can provide."

But the bill's opponents say the many procedures on public access to information is found in the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees. Among the duties of public officials and employees enumerated, more the Network, is "to make all public documents accessible to the public, within reasonable working hours."

But most agencies, it says, apply internal security as section of 'Kit 47(2) which claims public officials "to act promptly on letters and requests sent by the public within 15 days from receipt thereof, except when a letter within 15 days ... acknowledging receipt of the request, and stating that the request is being considered. If one does not follow up on the request, either the acknowledgment letter will be lost and it will certainly be years of dead ugly the letter of time while ignoring its spirit entirely.

• • •

IF THE case up to now, May's elections, everybody's talking about clean and honest government and public service, the need for transparency and accountability. Still, passing the Freedom of Information Bill would be one way of guaranteeing that the officials we elect will stay clean—because they know the public or the many inquisitive souls out there will be able to follow any paper trail of malfeasance or deception.

Certainly, government officials would no longer be able to smuggle plunderous deals between only 'shhh-in-confidently hiding behind bureaucratic procedures, red tape and just plain bureaucracies.

Ziplining

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

BELIEVE THOSE ADS WHEN THEY YOU'LL "INCREDIBLE India." I've been there many times but never tire of what it has to offer.

Last month I was in India again and this trip was particularly mind-boggling. My trip was sponsored by the Public Health Institute India and had nothing to do with tourism, but I thought I'd insert a few notes of the more mind-boggling experiences to entice you to visit. Incidentally, more tourists people might also pick up some ideas.

I landed at Delhi's airport in the middle of the night, only to set off for another two hour land trip to Bhopal, a village in the east state, Rajasthan. Bhopalnagar is a very sleepy place with narrow streets and an occasional camel meandering through, but it also has a bit of a notorious claim to fame: it's 25th century Mughal fort palace which has been converted into a hotel.

Don't think opulence here. The Moorish-style fort palace is impressive for they're now restoration, so the exterior is to offer everything, no doubt it will eventually do possible. It's the rooms to the hotel, and were luxurious. No elevator here, so imagine me carrying after midnight and a porter helping with my bags in two loads (we were in the top of the palace's very sprawl) room. It was spacious, but had all the amenities on one (I decided to see the ceiling fan), toilet and bath. No phone, if you needed something, there was to call number you had to call.

Although I got to bed only about 1 a.m., I was up in the crack of dawn. One look out of one of the windows with a breath-taking view of the mewell mountains and I knew I couldn't waste time.

Tarzan

I sprinted down to look for breakfast, promptly losing my way in the labyrinth but eventually locating my colleagues, who came from every continent in the world. "Are you joining us?" they asked, and I said, "Of course." Our schedule said we were going to do "experience" that morning, which I didn't understand. A clutch on the forearm put me on the translation: zipline zip.

I have to tell you I connect that in a previous life I was probably a lemur—a semi-tree-dwelling creature that had a love-the-hill, which has left me, in this life, with a morbid fear of heights. I don't particularly enjoy cable cars but can tolerate them (since I'm inside sound long cable).

Still with some trepidation, I joined my colleagues as we made our way to the office of Flying Fox, which was going to handle our zone. There was a cable line coming into the office, but no cable cars. Not only that, they disembarked outfits that looked like we were going para-sailing. There was a harness that went around the waist and the crotch, and two cables attached.

Oh well, I figured, maybe there were safety nets like the ones you get on boat rides. Then I began to have the term "zipline." An hostess in colleague told me the final word if in Cebu Rica but didn't convince some like had reservations. A yellow-toy were both joining because this was meant to be a team-building activity. Oh, well, I figured, misery loves company.

Two guides led us up the mountain slope, and I mean, up-up-up, with several breaks to catch our breath. I thought, oh, so maybe the cable car is up there. We finally got to a small clearing with a cable about three meters long. The guides explained they were going to orient us now on "zipping" and "braking" procedures.

At this moment and what was going to happen, I could imagine my inner lemur's eyes growing wider and wider. The two hooks on our outfits, it turned out, were going to be used to latch us on the cable wire. One of the hooks was actually a pulley which we were to hold with our right hand. This pulley would slow down our speed, the guide said.

Slow? Hey, we not told me about sliding. I wanted to ask if we would at least have visual clothes to wear as we zipped, but in the demonstration unfolded I realized the straps around our waist were designed to hold us. I was beginning to imagine myself in shapes, being hung on the clothesline to dry.

Still, like as I latched on to the zipping hand to me, but my training in Zen took over. Deeply, deeply . . . your fears leave as tense breath in, breath out. The guides seemed to it was quite safe, but added that nothing's totally safe. The wires are made in Switzerland, the pulleys come from France, and the clutch gloves (and the guide yourself) from Malaysia. My feedback knowing our Indian colleagues were going to go into stitch mode.

Icarus

To make a long story short, the former turned made it—not and through our cable wire but the complete course, which was five wires. The longest was 400 meters and I learned how we could have been zipping at speeds close to 100 kilometers per hour.

I didn't get to see the mountains because with each zip I kept my eyes in the sky, feeling like I was about to crash. The strong mountain crosscurrents kept swirling me around and I felt like an Indian Icarus that fluttering on a clothesline. On the third line, as the prepared to push me off the cliff, the guide told me I'll "go real fast." I shuddered, as I'm wont to do. "Faster than legs, lighter," he kind pushing up my butt. I realized that looking young was becoming related terms for me. "Young man," I wanted to tell him, "don't get savvy with me. I'm nearly 50." But I was afraid he'll get overlooked he'd let me before I could zip.

My other problem with being so light was that I would lose momentum during the zipping and stop quite a distance from the destination, leaving me dangling a hundred meters above the ground. That meant I had to twist around and pull myself in, legs still up in the air. Pulling myself in, I realized why the gloves already had instructions cut marks across the palm side where they were first given to me. Thank you, Pakistan.

Will I zipline again? Yes, but only if I'm assured my life, but other harms? By the time I did my fifth zipline at Bhopalnagar, I was horrified to realize I was beginning to enjoy it.

Wows, while doing zoom research for my columns, I found out that the Philippines actually has several ziplines in Tagaytay, Iloilo, Bohol, Cagayan de Oro and Davao (which has a zipline that goes over a river). Some of the shots intrigued: I looked at the photographs and I have to tell you that ziplines are indeed compared to Bhopalnagar.

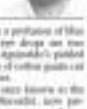
I have a feeling that others my kids are older they'll prove me to do the zipline and I'll have to go with them. The most recent age in Bhopalnagar's is 10.) Maybe by then, I would have overcome my acrophobia and moved on to bungee jumping or skydiving. Hmm, Stop reading my column to see how I'm doing.

Wows on: Check Rajasthan.net for details on India sightseeing and photos as you are my example what I was doing and my pillow hotel. For local ziplining, check ziplinephilippines.com and thedarkroomdancing.com for two of the company websites. I also found a zipline lounge in Cebu City on Facebook, but they are located in various newspaper articles. Try googling "Project Chocolate Tablea (Iloilo)," "Canopy challenge Cagayan de Oro" and "Bad Child Dream (Bohol)."

Email to mtan@inquirer.com.ph

Secrets in a dead man's possessions

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS ONE OF THE strengths of my work, but some people disagree. They read my research and writing to cover the complete story of the matter. They want me to write about the flour when I am more fascinated by the bees. What did Rizal eat for breakfast? Did Bonifacio dress up today? What I come up with answers some people marvel at the "painstaking" research, while others dismiss them as "useless" or "boring."

Dan Brad for each "clues" or "bases" in history is like Robert Langdon finding hidden meanings in signs and symbols. He will not be satisfied with an "CSI" reminding a killer from the way a course is bound.

History has do not have exciting lives. But having ingenious bright from stacks of books in a library or the many documents or archives.

The closest I have come to a "CSI" method was going over the manner Rizal left in Saguenhouse (such reminiscing his lockdown at the Santiago). I have pored through the autopsy report and photographs of bones found in the Manguedon range that were allegedly those of Andres Bonifacio. I have studied the way Rizal and Bonifacio wrote. Both are decidedly and are invested with a lack of balls. Then there was the much-publicized pre-war operation on Emilio Aguinaldo who was admitted to supervisement headed by an appendectomy. By complained of discomfort after the "successful" operation.

More mundane pointing equipment was unavoidable but, so they opened his up, agitated discovered that one of the surgeons had left a towel inside the President of the First Republic. When I asked a doctor if this was sufficient cause for a malpractice suit, he replied in the negative. "Don't be silly, Ambeth, only in a movie. It could have been worse. Imagine if they had left a scissor!"

Medical conversion of Aguinaldo's cadaver are explained in the medicine cabinet of his home in Kawit, Cavite. Often overlooked in a profusion of blue bottles that once contained eye drops are two small bottles, one containing Aguinaldo's pulled tetracycline and the other a piece of cotton gauze cut from the towel left by his doctors.

In the many of documents once known as the "IGR," (Philippine Insurgent Records), now preserved in the National Library, are papers relating to the assassination of Gen. Antonio Luna in Cabanatuan in 1899. Luna's aide Colonel Francisco "Paco" Roman Pilipino general of the Philippine Army, (as "Pio" despite the research and writing of the late Teodoro Agoncillo) who insisted that Luna was a great general who did not wear a single battle. Luna was also allegedly reminiscent to Cabanatuan for a meeting with Aguinaldo, but on the night before he was shot and stabbed—by Colonel Francisco serving as presidential guards, the same exactly soldiers he had easily tried to discipline for insubordination.

Often overlooked by historians is the inventory of Luna's bags after the assassination. Curiously, Basilio did not give an any does to be the inventory for his own bags, but the objects listed give an an idea into his personality.

He presume the inventory is complete and correct. He had two traveling bags, two basic (cheap) satchels but with no assortment of personal effects or belongings.

One leather traveling bag with military case, one elastic cloth, one stocked thing, nothing worn, one pocket Bible and, one pocket size pocketa, two small boxes shoe polish, one shoe brush, one soap dish with soap, one spare spurs."

Remember there were no hotels as we know them today. Luna would spend nights in the field or enjoyed the hospitality of homes with or without permission, as he brought his own soap and shoe polish. The inventory items, depending on the area, would have been the host, or his human handle his necessities. Rice powder reduced the shine on the boot. Lifted knees when the boots acid was hot.

It contains traveling bag continued, "one pair shoes half worn, one pair heavy-soled ordered for her (Luna's) use, two pair boots, one pair light-use or leather, one sombrero."

"A bed with one black book case, one mirror in two frame, two white sheets, white pants, one blue overalls, one brown bedspread, two linen sacks, one pair canvas slippers, one empty bottle pomade, one small bottle cologne, one bottle, 22 small boxes cartridges. Ten same buts, one gauze silk cap, one English dictionary, one Bolang list.

The hand containing one thick exercise, one pair gingham pants with clothes, three striped Cebuia pants, five calzoncillos, two khaki pants, one pair of shoes, one pair of slippers, one pants, one hip boots, three colored handkerchiefs, six books and shoulder pads.

One box with all books, four coats, one cabaj, two American bayonets, one pair hand-colored holders, one Japanese knife case, two linens with 28 handkerchiefs, six khaki neckbands, 12 pairs socks, one pair shoes, one pair pantalones TV, one wood set, one wood scissors, wood pants, eight white pants, seven white undershirts, 17 shirt collars, 12 shoes, her pillow cases, two cushions do khaki, two wood socks and khakiness hat."

Curious and curious, the contents of Andronicus? Twelve books, but no other? Clothes, boots and no and slippers? You will be surprised what historical events a dead man's contents may tell you!

Comments are welcome at inquirer@inquirer.com.ph

We've got the LOWEST RATE – EVER and a MILLION MILES up for grabs!

THE LOWEST RATE– EVER AND A MILLION MILES UP FOR GRABS! Allied Bank Mabuhay Miles MasterCard Boasts Its Miles-earning Program With The Lowest Point-to-Mile Rate Offer at P30!

JULY 28, 2005, Allied Bank Center, Makati – A new promo takes off with a double-edged payload of advantages for valued cardholders.

The Lowest Points Mile Ever Offered

"It's a long way 'til the holidays, but one can consider it an early Christmas treat," says Erlinda L. Rono, Jr., senior vice president and head of the Credit Card Department, "At P30 point-to-Mile, it's the lowest rate ever offered even among all other credit cards in the country. Our cardholders can load up on their Mabuhay Miles as never before than ever before!"

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From July 29 through December 31, 2005, cardholders earn one e-mile ticket for every P1,000 single receipt purchase. All their accumulated e-mile(s) will then be reflected in their monthly statements of account.

A Million Thanks to a Million Miles

"Thanks to the big Metrowide happiness on the 11th of the next month, Allied Bank Mabuhay Miles to 30 Miles winners. 10 of which will win 50,000 Mabuhay Miles! To 30 lucky winners, 10 of which will win 50,000 Mabuhay Miles! To 30 lucky winners, 10 of which will win 50,000 Mabuhay Miles!"

Mr. Cruz continues, "To give you an idea how the prizes translate, 50,000 Miles is like going on two round trips to Hong Kong or three round trips to any domestic destination. 150,000 Miles equal two round trips to the US or 6 round trips to Asian countries like Bangkok, Singapore or Jakarta. That, translated into local destinations, is like going on 15 round trips on Philippine Airlines."

A Boon To All New Allied Bank Mabuhay Miles MasterCard Applicants

Nice to be told. Indeed, are new cardholders. All approved applications that fall within the promo period shall receive 50 e-mile tickets as rewards.

Mr. Rono explains, "We want our cardholders to get a good feel into the program so that its instantly feel the welcoming environment of being in the 'all' Mabuhay Miles Member's Lounge. There were there some, the [illegible] for all of us."

What's more, applicants for any Allied Bank credit card from July 15 to October 15, 2005 get a free Carry-Roll bag upon submission and use."

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"The acceptance from our valued cardholders has been tremendous through the years, and all this is to thank them for their patronage," Mr. Rono says. "So we speak our customer is looking up yet other ways to keep them satisfied. It's always been our aim and our promise. And we're definitely here to keep it."

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*Please see Carry-Roll bag Special Application Form for details. Terms and Conditions apply.

THE LOWEST RATE– EVER AND A MILLION MILES UP FOR GRABS! Allied Bank Mabuhay Miles MasterCard Boasts Its Miles-earning Program With The Lowest Point-to-Mile Rate Offer at P30!

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Selective human rights advocacy

LETTERS

I HAVE ALWAYS HELD people and organizations advocating human rights in great reverence, those who believe that the rights of an individual should always be upheld, regardless of the person's social standing or his beliefs. I am among those who are convinced that if there is any way to advance as a nation, it should be with reverence for people's inherent rights.

What I do not get though is the seemingly random, if not selective, "focus" of human rights advocates.

I commend Commission on Human Rights Chairperson Leila de Lima for her campaign to uphold human rights, including those of suspected rebels for even more the rights of rebels must be respected. The allegation though cannot account for her failure to speak up for people victimized by rebel groups, she has no word of encouragement for the families of NPA victims to fight for justice; neither have Cherie Mercado, president of CRAF, support in their recent appointed NPA liquidations squads. Recently, two civilians were wounded when NPA rebels shot to death a soldier in Pasabdola District, Davao City, but nothing has been heard from the CHR chair. The silence has been loud and can drown whatever it is going to say.

Some people suffer in silence, including NPA victims who are afraid of retaliation. Everybody's rights should be respected. In many instances, the NPA rebels are more fortunate because their rights are acknowledged while those of their victims are ignored, by no one's design. The rights of the rebels, for us, should do so without ignoring the rights of the people they victimize. Otherwise, how can we claim to be champions of human rights?

—EMMANUEL VELASCO,
manny_vm79@yahoo.com

Some candidates dishonor the names of their parents

WITH DUE RESPECT TO ATTY. NONOY Aquino, if I were him, I would be grateful to Jun. Manuel Villar for saying, "When you're looking at me, you're looking at Manny Villar, not at my father and my mother." (Inquirer, 10/30/05) With that statement, Villar gave him the opportunity to answer this way:

"When you look at me, you don't see only one face but three faces, mine, and those of my parents. And, because I always carry with me wherever I am the faces and genes of my parents, I can only do things that will make them happy and bring honor to their good name — to never cause them embarrassment, with utmost dedication and integrity as we pursue together a better and progressive Philippines for all Filipinos."

I find it very unfortunate that, in their desperation, candidates do things that dishonor their beloved parents. I am very confident that really wise and daughters should honor and give importance to their parents. In Nonoy's case, it is just right that he invoked the memory of his parents, more so because their way of raising their children has borne good fruits.

—EDUARDO B. CAMIS,
gascam@surfsup.net

Strange text message

MY FRATERNAL BROTHER IS MASONRY and computer literate C. Tolentino, a retired assistant regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, came to my residence and told me about his receipt of a text message on Sept. 30, 2005 from the Government Service Insurance System, which I quote: "Your Sept. pension is lower than your regular pension. Please report an adjustment on or before Sept. 23. Thank you for your understanding." Whatever that means, Tolentino was somewhat puzzled. He added that if I had also received the same text message from the GSIS. I told him that I haven't probably because I had replaced my GSI number due to what seemed to have been known to a syndicate, inside the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Manila, that tried to call me through my cell phone when I was witnessing regularly the official receipt numbers issued by business establishments in the province.

To clarify matters, Tolentino would like to know from the bureau's records, as to say what was the real intention of the GSIS in sending him that kind of text message without the sender's name. Does it also mean that there is syndicate inside the GSIS that prey on innocent pensioners? If other pensioners received the same text message from the GSIS, it is imperative that they ask management. The real motive of sending such anomalous text message is questionable.

—GODOFREDO G. PETILLA SR.,
39 Real Street,
Barangay Camambugan,
East, Camarines Norte 4600

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Across the NATION

Bridge collapse disrupts supply of fuel, says solon

BATANGAS CITY—THE COLlapse of a major bridge here at the height of Typhoon "Santi" last Oct. 31 has disrupted the supply of fuel, plastic products, cement, flour and other grains to Metro Manila, a congressman said.

Rep. Hermilando Mandanas (2nd district) said he has reported the situation to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Mandanas said the collapse of the Bridge of Promise has all but stopped the transport of 70 percent of liquefied petroleum gas supply from refineries in the province to Metro Manila.

He said cargo trucks had to travel 20 kilometers more to Metro Manila as a result of the bridge collapse.

The fuel depot of Philippine Airlines in Barangay Pinamucan here also suffered as a result of the bridge collapse. The transport of fuel from the depot, which supplies 30 percent of all aviation fuel used by local airlines, was also disrupted.

The supply of plastic resin, used in the manufacture of plastic products, was also disrupted.

Arief Sari Hizi, superintendent for operations of JG Summit Petrochem, said 5 percent of his firm's resin goes to a sister company, 90 percent is used locally while the remaining resin production is exported.

Diaz said the firm suffered heavily from the bridge collapse.

According to Mandanas, the supply of cement in Metro Manila also faces disruption.

He said 50 percent of cement used in Metro Manila are manufactured in two plants—Cemex and Eurocem—located in areas that have become isolated as a result of the bridge collapse.

Two plants of San Miguel Corp. and Purefoods also could not deliver flour and other grains as a result of the bridge collapse.

The destruction of the bridge, the congressman said, rendered half of the population of the second district (including Batangas City and the towns of San Jose, San Pascual, San Luis, Taisan and Lobo) immobile.

A man and his son died when their car fell with the bridge.

Engineer Wenlando Olores, of the Department of Public Works and Highways' Batangas engineering district, said debris carried by strong current to the Calumbuyan River slammed into the center pier of the bridge, causing it to collapse.

Olores said the bridge was 45 years old and built during the administration of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Marvah Irish Lucabo, Inquirer Southern Luzon

NBI probes Eastern Samar school projects

By Joey Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE NATIONAL BUREAU of Investigation (NBI) in Eastern Visayas is investigating reports of anomalies surrounding some projects implemented by a state university in Eastern Samar.

Antonio Pagarigan, NBI Eastern Visayas regional director, said the reports alleged the projects were carried out without bidding and some were substandard.

The investigation focuses on six buildings in the Eastern Samar State University (ESSU), which cost P50 million and built through the pork barrel funds of Eastern Samar Rep. Teodolfo Coquilla.

The questioned projects included the construction of the library building, the food and technology laboratory building and the Hotel and Restaurant Management (HRM) building, the renovation of the freestanding sections, flagpole, Ugnayan and academic building and the repair of the college and academic buildings of the ESSU.

Pagarigan said his office received an order from the NBI central office directing him to conduct an investigation on the alleged anomalies based on a letter-complaint filed here (the names of the Eastern Visayas Regional Commission Association as complainant).

He said ESSU president Reynaldo Lorilla, who appointed as the NBI office on Oct. 27, insisted that there were no irregularities in the projects.

But Pagarigan said the NBI would continue its investigation.

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Pangarap na bituin, naabot din...

Kinabukasan ng 900 kabataang mag-aaral, ngayo'y nagniningning

Libu-libong kabataan sampu ng kanilang mga magulang ang nangangarap na makatapos ng pag-aaral sa pamantasang ito ang tamang daan sa matatag na kinabukasan. Gaya ni Irish Nicole A. Cruz ng Sta. Cruz, Angat, Bulacan, nag-aaral sa President Diosdado P. Macapagal High School.

Halos panawan na siya ng pagasang matupad ang minimithing pangarap, hanggang dumating ang isang Secretary Jun Ebdane sa buhay n'ya. Nakita ni Ebdane ang katagayan at kakulangan ng paaralan sa nakuning lugar kaya't agad siyang kumilos upang ipatayo ang paaralang ito.

Kung ang mga mahihirap na kabataang tulad ni Nicole na taga Bulacan ay personal na inasikaso ni Jun Ebdane, walang duda na magtatagumpay ang kanyang Pambansang Development Program. Tunay na kakaiba si Jun Ebdane sa mga pulitiko natin! Magaling. Determinado. Subok at bihasa sa development na siyang daan tungo sa kaunlaran.

Di kaya si Jun Ebdane ang Tamang Daan sa 2010?

Case eyed for arrests on Genuino son charge

LUIS HEÑOZ, LAGUNA—THE son of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) Chair Efraim Genuino filed a libel complaint against three men who had been arrested for distributing copies of a tabloid article alleging the son of Senator is engaged in favor of an nonidentified municipal coalition here.

Anthony "Toti" Catrabas, the Pagcor head's son, is known to be running for mayor of this town.

On Sunday, policemen Roberto Guzmany and Rodney Mantiagao arrested Albert Bernardo, 26, Ll. Justin Malagamba, 22, and Christopher B. Baena, 26 at this municipal town.

Their crime? Libel for distributing photocopies of a tabloid article that reported the handing of rumors from the Nou Bilibid Prisons in regards in favor of the nonidentified candidates.

The article said 20 vans brought the inmates to register as voters here. It said the candidate was son of a government official, but didn't identify him.

Lawyer Melvin Villa, the arrested men's counsel, said his clients would sue the policemen for arbitrary detention and warrantless arrest.

The younger Genuino candidacy has been endorsed by incumbent Mayor Cainta Perez.

Villa quoted the town's police chief, Supt. Chito Bernabeu, as saying the arrests were made based on a verbal complaint.

"It's not supposed to be," said Villa. The lawyer said he learned later that Genuino had filed a written complaint of libel against his clients, but after they were arrested.

> 'I never heard of a case of a warrantless arrest for libel...'

Inquest proceedings were held on Monday, Ali Jende Day.

Sought for comment, Bernabeu said "there's no problem with that."

"The fiscal found the arrest valid," he said.

Bernabeu said Genuino filed a "verbal" complaint before the arrests on Sunday, which, he added, became the basis for the arrests. The three posted bail on Wednesday.

Villa said the procedure was highly irregular. "I never heard of a case of a warrantless arrest for libel," he said.

He also said that in libel cases, the material over which anyone was being sued should be first proven to be libelous.

He said he was unaware if Genuino also sued the tabloid and the article's writer for libel. "It's valid," he said.

Genuino could not be reached for comment. *Marlowe Cinco, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

DWINDLING FUNDS

Benguet rehab work hangs

By Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—OFFICIALS here are waiting for the onset days that the rainy season is over so they could start the repair work in areas devastated by Typhoon "Pepeng"—the arrival of migratory birds.

They said the arrival of the birds, locally called "billing," was a sign that the rainy season is over and whatever funds their communities have left could now be used to repair damaged roads and bridges.

Gov. Nestor Fongwan said officials are now restless over the depletion of calamity funds due to Pepeng.

He said officials fear that they may no longer have the resources to respond to their constituents' needs should another storm arrive before the year ends.

"But once the migratory birds would appear, there would be no more worry over how to replenish the calamity funds," Fongwan said.

"The trouble is that the birds are not yet here, he said.

"In the past, their arrival was a signal that the people should not worry anymore that another typhoon would come," he said.

Mayors Antonio Galman (La Trinidad), Felicito Payauan (Baguio), Concepcion Balias (Itogon) and Isabelo Pascual (Tublay) said they are now confronted with stabilizing what is left of their calamity funds.

They said the province's other towns—Sagpon, Bokod, Sablan, Tuba, Kabayan, Mankayan, Buguet, Kapangan and Kibungan—share the same problem.

"More of us are fourth or fifth class towns. Our annual budget could only afford to allot meager funds for calamities," Balias said.

She said Itogon took almost all of the towns' annual local calamity funds.

In stark shine, the funds were used to rehabilitate 61 interior roads and three provincial roads, Balias said. The same source of funds was tapped for relief goods.

Pascual said, "Much as we would like to spend entirely our calamity fund, we could not since we are not sure if there would be no more weather disturbance. We might find ourselves hopeless with no single centavo to spend if we will release all our calamity funds now."

PEOPLE bring supplies from Benguet to Baguio and other markets on foot after landslides made major roads in the province impassable by vehicles. AP PHOTO/BULLIT MARQUEZ

Fongwan said even the provincial government faces the same problem.

Officials reported losses of P386.1 million in crops, P9.29 million in agricultural infrastructure and P11.52 million in farmlands.

Fongwan said the province has P26 million in calamity funds this year but much of it had already been spent.

NEWSBRIEFS

■ MINDORO ORIENTAL

QC drug courier falls

MANDAUE POLICEMEN arrested a Quezon City-based drug courier late Sunday during a sting operation, police said.

Supt. Jaime Rotilamen, Puerto Galera police chief, said Jackson Briones, 32, of Bolosan Hills in Quezon City, was arrested after selling a packet of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) to an undercover policeman in Puerto Galera.

Found on Briones was another packet and several more shabu packets.

Rotilamen said Briones was a member of the Alonto drug gang and faces a string of criminal cases in Quezon City.

At the time of his arrest, Briones wore a police uniform and will be charged with that offense as well.

Marlowe Cinco, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ CEBU CITY

Mayor cuts cops' power

THE POLICE station of Consolacion town, 12 km north of Cebu City, went without electricity for two days starting Tuesday noon after Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia, Avelino Sungcad, had over the pullout of his two police bodyguards, cut off power connection to the police office.

Chief Insp. Bonifacio Tenson, Consolacion chief of police, said power was restored Thursday, but the mayor still has no police bodyguards.

Policemen had to use emergency rechargeable lights and candles to keep the station running, Tenson said.

But the station borrowed electricity from a Commission on Elections office beside it to process documents.

Sungcad dismissed the return of his two police bodyguards, after were released from their posts in late September were pending cases at the Ombudsman.

Sungcad also threatened to cut of the police force's gasoline allowance and call for another mass of angry village watchmen as his bodyguards. *Delta E. Aragon, Inquirer Visayas*

■ CAMP VICENTE LIM

Massacre suspect detained

THE SUSPECT arrested in Antique on Sunday is now in police custody here to face charges in connection with the massacre of nine people during a robbery at a branch of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) in Calbayog (town) in May 2006.

The town that picked up Eugenio Hilario, police said, arrived in this police camp Wednesday night.

Supt. Edgar de Leon, director of the Regional Mobile Group in the Caldaracan region, said Hilario would be presented in court on Monday for arraignment.

Hilario was shot in the leg after he resisted arrest in Antique. Two more suspects in the RCBC massacre are at large.

Marlowe Cinco, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Malacañang: Why the fuss over poll tax?

By TJ Burgonio and Dona Z. Pazolagan

MALACAÑANG IS WONDERing why there is so much fuss over the Bureau of Internal Revenue's proposed 3-percent tax on campaign contributions.

"The 3-percent campaign tax is outside the purview of the expanded withholding tax system of the BIR which is allowed under the BIR Code and it has been in existence for about 30 years now," Ambassador Ushio, deputy presidential spokesperson, said in a briefing.

However, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) contends that the BIR move needs to be studied further.

Election Commissioner Gregorio Larrazabal yesterday said that BIR representatives were told last week that they could not tax campaign donors unless the election law that exempted contributions from any form of tax was amended.

The BIR move has stirred a debate as to its timing, among others, as well as protests from the Liberal Opposition and other political groups claiming that this was aimed at harassing them.

The BIR has proposed imposing the 3-percent withholding tax on a candidate's declared expenses and campaign contributions as it could mean more revenues.

Under Revenue Regulations No. 6-09, all political candidates, parties and their donors should remit a 3-percent withholding tax on their campaign expenditures and contributions.

Lorelei Fajardo, another deputy presidential spokesperson, said that the administration would comply if the BIR action.

"All candidates for that matter presenting themselves to lead the nation should comply," Fajardo said.

BIR should clear confusion

"This not just focused on the opposition. Even the administration candidates will be taxed. So there's no reason for anybody to say this is a strategy of the administration for the opposition candidates," she added.

The Palace spokesperson conceded that there was some confusion and that the BIR should reissue an information campaign, and even explain its mechanics to Congress.

Ushio even suggested that a case could be filed with the Supreme Court to seek a clarification about this.

As far as he understood it from BIR's explanation, Ushio said is that the withholding tax applied only to goods and services.

"Let us say a candidate will have to buy a shirt that will cost him or her P100. The 3 percent or the P3 out of that P100 is going to be withheld and the P97 is going to be the actual purchase. So the 3 percent will go to BIR and the balance of P97 will go to the supplier," he said.

"Since the 3 percent, where will it go? To the BIR it is going to be allowed as a tax declaration so the part of the supplier of the product and when they computer for the income tax…it is allowed as a deduction or a tax credit," he added.

Specific law required

Larrazabal said that tax officials had so far failed to satisfactorily answered questions by the Comelec.

"We're part of the implementers. We have to look at that first," he said.

In last week's meeting, Larrazabal said, the Comelec discussed with BIR representatives over a "lot of questions, not resolutions."

"We told the BIR there's concern because you need a specific law on that," Larrazabal said.

On voting, expenditures, he said the BIR explained that the additional tax would be imposed on sellers or suppliers of campaign paraphernalia and services, and again "only if they declared [the expenses]."

He also hinted problematic BIR's idea to compel the candidates or political parties to withhold 3 percent of what they were supposed to pay to their suppliers, and then later pay the BIR directly.

"That's taxing the candidates, is heedless there," he said. "It's not valuables we are in favor or not. We told the BIR we should discuss this further. You have to look in the details first," Larrazabal said.

REP. TESS Hontiveros-Baraquel

SPEC. ED. Danny Lim

REP. ROILO Golez

SONGE Bistoyong

COL. ABEL Querubin

REP. FERDINAND Marcos Jr.

REP. TEODORO Locsin Jr.

SEN. JUAN Ponce Enrile

REP. SATUR Ocampo

JOEY de Venecia III

SEN. MIRIAM Defensor-Santiago

ADEL Tamano

Strange bedfellows in 2010 Senate race

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ginning to join the oldest political party in the land was not a problem.

He said negotiations were ongoing with other groups to fill the slate.

Reform Mover Rep. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., namesake son of the late dictator, could get a slot as part of the NPC's ploy to have a "unity slate," **amid a party stalwart who asked** not to be named so as not to provoke ongoing talks.

Marcos' father was a member of the Liberal Party (LP) founded by the late President Manuel Roxas, grandfather of Sen. Mar Roxas who will contest the vice presidency under LP.

The dictator Marcos broke with the LP after failing to get his party's nomination for president and ran as the LP presidential candidate against then Liberal President Diosdado Macapagal, father of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Marcos' junior has been seen lately in public with Villar. He showed up on Wednesday at the Villar residence for the send-off ceremony for Gen. Jorge Larrazabal yesterday said that BIR representatives were told last week that they could not tax campaign donors unless the election law that exempted contributions from any form of tax was amended.

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Palace rejects talks with oil companies

Front page A1

to the Department of Justice-Department of Energy Task Force.

"The President has always been open [to a dialogue], but we have a task force," Undersecretary Lorelei Fajardo said in a briefing.

Undersecretary Anthony Golez said any consultation must be entered through the task force.

"This is happening in support of the reconstruction and rehabilitation of hundreds of thousands of families made victimized by calamities," he said.

Dreamdance said the task force would meet next week with business groups, oil companies and the transport sector to discuss if the "emergency situation" remains and consider proposals to help those affected by the series of storms that battled Luzon.

Full-page ad

A full-page advertisement ran out in the papers on Thursday, oil industry leaders requested Mr. Arroyo to "refuse to go down and discuss with you, to that you may consider recalling" Executive Order No. 839.

They said the order's "imminent danger" to the economy, business and employment "far outweighed" the benefits.

"A weakened oil sector, forced to sell at a loss, cannot continue to play its strategic role as the government's partner in the nation's growth and in ensuring an adequate level of supply given the instability of world prices of crude oil and petroleum products," they said.

Signatories to the ad were executive director of Chemical Technologies, Eastern Petroleum Corp., Flying V International Engineers Phils. Inc., Liquigas Philippines Corp., Philippine Institute of Petroleum, Filipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Pryce Gases Inc., PTT Philippines Corp., Seaoil Philippines Inc., Total Dealers Association, Total Philippines Corp., and UNAHCO-Pilipinas Energy Corp.

The government has come under pressure from big business groups like the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Makati Business Club and Federation of Philippine Industries in EO 839.

They warned that the order would cause oil industry to issue losses, pose a threat to adequate supply and serve as disincentive to future investments.

Increase of P4.50/liter

An oil executive said consumers should brace themselves for an increase in the prices of gasoline and diesel by P4.50 a liter, once Malacañang decides to lift the price cap.

Flying V chair Ramon Villarelencio said the company would mitigate the impact of the price adjustment through staggered increases.

Villarelencio said the company was preparing to roll them in stages the increase over a three-week period of around P1.50 a liter per week.

"We want to mitigate the impact on consumers, so we will divide the impact over three weeks. The EO will be lifted soon because the higher arrearages should not stop small businessmen from getting their supplies," he said.

Golez also said six more senatorial candidates would be announced in the coming weeks.

PMP has largest haul

Former President Joseph Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) has the largest haul of senatorial aspirants to date.

Estrada's nominee for re-election Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada and his fellow re-electionist Senator Jinggoy Estrada and his fellow re-electionist Senator Jinggoy Estrada and Miriam Defensor-Santiago (a guest candidate of the Villar camp), Bonifacio Rep. Mujiv Hataman, Quezon Rep. Rafael Nantes and Bataan Rep. Enrique Garcia.

Estrada's nominee for re-election

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GF Champhil Building, A. Arnaiz Ave., Makati City
Tel No. 888-4233/Fax. No. 885-4290

MANNY Pacquiao trains with Freddie Roach during Wednesday's workout at the Wildcard Boxing Club in Hollywood, California. The workout was attended by the media in Los Angeles. AP

Comelec urged to monitor political ads in Pacquiao fight

By Nikko Dizon and Leila B. Salaverria

ENGAGED BY THE POLITICAL MACHINE, evidently tired during Manny Pacquiao's last fight, a militant group yesterday urged the Commission on Elections to monitor and other poll watchdogs to closely monitor the televised commercials that would be shown during Pacquiao's Nov. 14 clash with Puerto Rican Miguel Cotto.

The Bayan Muna Alternative Mahistrado (Bayan) also appealed to manufacturers to stop airing political ads during the telecast of the bout to be held in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr. said by phone that the showing of political ads aimed at public service announcements during the match fight is akin with Ricky Martin's use of Harvard dormitory of publishing."

Reyes said he was certain that Filipino fans who would watch the Pacquiao-Cotto bout would want "to see from politics" just for a day.

"We appeal to the candidates to be sensitive to the viewers and not flood us with irrelevant political ads," he said. "Some viewers just want to enjoy the fight and not be isolated or distracted by the barrage of political ads."

Initiator Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, and two other officials—Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. Chair Efraim Genuino and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) Chief Augusto Syjuco—are Bro. Eddie Villanueva's most vulnerable shows during the Pacquiao-Hatton fight.

Bayan contended that Comelec can "prioritize" to prevent the showing of political ads before the filing of certificates of candidacies but urged that poll body to monitor the advertisements.

The Comelec could also ask media outlets airing radio ads to enforce a breakdown of the exposures of those political ones and how much these "brands" have purchased as the production of such commercials, Reyes said.

This one is staying home

A lawmaker who is a regular ringside spectator in Pacquiao's fights yesterday said he would forego his trip to the United States to watch the bout and instead donate his fare to the victims of the Nov. 2 fire in Barobod City that killed 17 people.

Barobod Rep. Maximo Pantoviella said he would donate the money he would spend for the trip to the fire victims.

Asked how much he usually spends for such trips, Pantoviella declined to answer, saying he would compute the amount first.

Pantoviella usually watches Pacquiao's fights at ringside since he also covers the event for Bombo Radyo Philippines.

About 20 lawmakers, including Speaker Prospero Nograles, have flown to the Brit ed States presumably to watch the fight.

Manny eyes history again with 7th title

Front page 6-1

the International Boxing Organization belt to match a ring record with a title in a fifth eight weight class.

With the hard-hitting Cotto's World Boxing Organization welterweight belt on the line on Bob Mor. 14 hotel to be fought at 145 pounds, Pacquiao could capture an unheard record by claiming a title in a seventh weight division.

"If I win it's feeling history—seven titles in seven different weight divisions," Pacquiao said. "I would be so proud—being a Filipino who captured se. ben in seven weight divisions."

A staging boxer

Pacquiao secured his place among boxing's all-time greats, adding Boston's junior welterweight crown to your world ti. this or lightweight, super featherweight, junior featherweight, featherweight and flyweight.

Pacquiao's prowess in the ring has made him a hero in his homeland, and his victories over De La Hoya and Hatton have raised his profile in the United States.

This week, he appeared on Ub television's "Manny Round Live" program, impressing with his singing performance.

It wasn't such a big departure for a man who has appeared on television and in film in the Philippines, where he is also a sought after product endorser and a budding politician who plans to run for a seat in the nation's Congress in next year's elections.

'He transcends boxing'

Pacquiao also took some time out last month to devote time, still to construction work in the wake of a devastating typhoon in his homeland.

It's the kind of gesture that has earned the devotion of his compatriots and is now garnering attention and accolades overseas.

"The kid is something that now transcends boxing," said promoter Bob Arum. AFP

To our dear customers and business partners:

Thank you for your help.

Through your support, we are planting 30,000 trees in 28 hectares along the Sierra Madre Mountain Range*.

*Reforestation areas: Kalwet Watershed in Tanay, Rizal and in Bak-na-Bato National Park in San Miguel, Bulacan
** Through the efforts of Environmental Studies Institute, Miriam College Foundation

South
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SOUTH SUPERMARKET BRANCHES

PEACE UNIVERSITY GRADUATES Dr. Jose Wiesseel, president of the Japan-based Peace Boat ship, points out the conductive responses and new policies to resolve the global financial crisis and other problems facing Asia, such as climate change and pandemic diseases, to its speech co-graduates of the University of Peace at Ateneo de Manila University on Oct. 31. Twenty students from 18 Asian countries received their MA in International Peace Studies, a 15-month program of the UN-mandated University for Peace and Ateneo de Manila University. In this unique dual-degree program, classes are held on Ateneo's Loyola campus and University for Peace main campus in Costa Rica. JOY PENALES

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Pacquiao's workout packs 'em in

By Francis T.J. Ochoa

HOLLYWOOD—AS A FORMER BOXER WHO REACHED THE POINT OF NEEDing reconstructive surgery to correct the damage the sport had inflicted on his face, Mickey Rourke knows all about speed and power.

And the former stand of the monster American trainer Freddie Roach, now a Hollywood star, knows where to find both when Manny Pacquiao and Miguel Cotto clash on Nov. 14 for the WBO welterweight title in Las Vegas.

"Miguel is a powerful boxer and he's naturally bigger," Rourke said. "But Manny has the speed.

"And I believe speed kills."

Fighting on an amateur from 1961 to 1972, Rourke compiled a record of 28 wins, 17 by knockout, and six losses. He was undefeated as a professional, piling up six wins, four by knockout, and two draws before retiring in 1991 to focus on acting.

Rourke's premiere highlighted Pacquiao's media day Wednesday, when the Filipino ring icon drew a packed crowd at the Wild Card gym to see the mitt drills he is to do for preparation for his duel with Cotto on the MGM Grand.

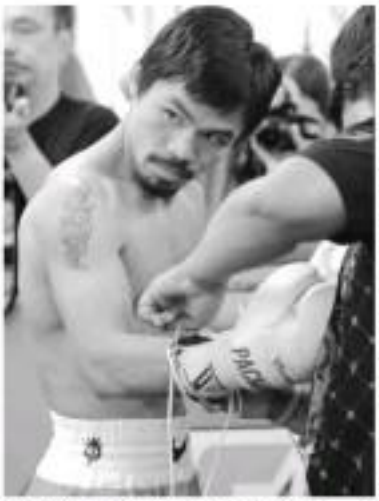
"This is the biggest fight of my career and I will do my best to win this one," Pacquiao said for the nth time, making sure no one misses the importance as he shares history yet again.

"I'll try to win a title in a seventh weight division and no other boxer has done that yet, so this is history."

After fielding questions, Pacquiao went through his routine for the media workout, which was more than twice as packed as Cotto's well-attended press preview the day before.

The huge disparity in attendance was evident in the easy photographers and writers pushed for prime space around the ring to catch a glimpse of the workout, which was also attended by celebrity Maria Lopez.

"Look at the press, look at the people," promoter Bob Arum told Entertainment's Michael Buffer, who was present at the workout. "It's like a throwback to the days of (Muhammad) Ali...it's incredible."



PAWWY! Pacquiao pats his gloves as is Wednesday's workout for the press. AFP

Arum, in an informal chat with journalists, said Pacquiao's popularity has soared that, after an appearance at US-PPV's Sports Center, there were talk of replaying the episode because of its high audience share.

Pacquiao had recently guested in his first nationally televised talk show in the United States and even sang for the audience, a performance that is making rounds on the Web and in a solid bit at online video site YouTube.

He reportedly also has an invitation to watch an LA Lakers game on Friday from the first seat of team owner Jerry Buss.

The reigning, pound-for-pound champion began his workout with strength and conditioning coach Alex Ariza putting him through a series of twist-up exercises.

He then worked the mitts for three rounds with Roach, who said they were starting to "taper off." Pacquiao then hit the double end bolter working down more on the ring.

'Cotto doesn't stand a chance'

Roach continued to belittle Cotto's chances for the rumble dubbed "Firepacto," believing that the Puerto Rican is a goner once he steps into the ring against the equal-punching Pacquiao.

"Cotto's shot," Roach said. "He doesn't stand a chance."

As confident as Roach is, Pacquiao insists that not everybody is underestimated he wasn't taking Cotto lightly.

"He is a strong fighter with a powerful left hook," Pacquiao said. "I have to be at my best when I fight him. I want to win so my countrymen will be proud of me and that many boxing fans will be happy."

"A lot of people say Cotto is bigger and stronger, but I have my speed and he will not hit me," he added. "We know how to beat him and like I said before, knowledge is power."

Roach he agreed that Pacquiao's speed will threaten the tempo of the fight because "speed is heavier than power. Cotto is very strong but not more than Manny can oppose than with his speed. All Manny has to do is stay off the ropes and stay away from Cotto's reach."

Asked, though, to rate the chances of both fighters, Roach he played it safe: "It's 50-50."

The trainer did say he admired Pacquiao a lot because the General Santos City-based southpaw packs "a lot of heart and a lot of aggression."

PACQUIAO FAN: Mickey Rourke

Roach a huge Pacman asset, says actor Rourke

By Francis T.J. Ochoa

HOLLYWOOD—CAUGHT IN A CHORUS of clicking cameras, Manny Pacquiao thought for a long and hard before answering a question posed by California celebrity Maria Lopez.

Who do you want to play you if a movie on your life was made?

"Myself," Pacquiao finally answered, turning out to a child-like laughter at the Wild Card gym on Wednesday.

Freddie Roach, though, should have no problem with that question. If a movie were to be made on his life, practitioners will have no problem looking for the lead star.

There's a character already screaming with an Academy Award nomination in his throat.

"I'll shout you heartbreaks," said Mickey Rourke, who was nominated for an Oscar for his role in "The Wrestler" in 2008.

"I'll have to wait, though, before I take on the role, at least until I see old Man Freddie," said the actor, now 57.

Inevitably, Rourke was peppered with questions about Roach, who referred to the actor as "my best friend."

"He's the kind of trainer who, if you were under him, you could have to give more than a 100-percent effort," said Rourke. "He's passionate and strict."

Rourke acknowledged that Roach is a huge asset for Pacquiao when the Filipino superstar faces Miguel Cotto on Nov. 14.

The battle of trainers has been a touchy issue in the Pacquiao-Cotto hustle, especially after Roach predicted a Berto-like story in the first round.

Team Cotto made it clear that the two people on the ring will not include the trainers of both camps.

"Freddie Roach can say what he wants, he's not the one who's going to fight in the ring," said 32-year-old Cotto trainer Joe Santiago through an interpreter Tuesday.

Rourke, who arrived wearing a gray jacket and with a stubble to match his tousled hair, turned heads when he arrived and headed straight for Pacquiao.

Rourke is set to portray the villain Whitlatch in the "Iron Man" sequel.

SPORTSWATCH

FEI VP to observe Nov. 11 equestrian polls

THE LEADERSHIP TUG OF WAR IN EQUESTRIAN CIRCLES between Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. and party-list Rep. Carlos Lacsonas is expected to end when the Equestrian Association of the Philippines holds its elections next week.

Cojuangco, also president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, confirmed the Nov. 11 election with Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) vice president Christopher Hodson acting as observer.

EAP secretary general Mitos Bautista and Cojuangco's daughter, Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, were appointed to oversee the voters' list.

World Darts slot up for grabs in RP qualifier

A 128-PLAYER PHILIPPINE ELIMINATION TOURNAMENT FOR THE WORLD DARTS Championship is up for grabs in a two-day qualifier that starts tomorrow at the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall in Cainta.

Lawrence Ilagan, last year's RP qualifier to the London tournament and a bronze medalist at the Taiwan Round Cup Asian championship, is slugged and coached this slot with, among others, Brian Farlan, recent Shanghai Open qualifier Ian Perez, 2008 French Open champion Jose Briones and 2007 Philippine qualifier Jojo Bandiano. *R. Andrin*

Jaycees, ARPI hold nationwide arnis training

A NATIONWIDE TRAINING PROGRAM BOARING "THE UNIQUE MATTHEW'S HOUSE" AND "THE UNIQUE MATTHEW'S HOUSE" AND "THE UNIQUE MATTHEW'S HOUSE" AND

THE YANKEES celebrate after beating the Phillies, 7-3, in Game 6 and clinching the Major League Baseball World Series, 4-2, on Wednesday.

Matsui's future still uncertain

MATSUI

NEW YORK—HIDEKI Matsui's future is as uncertain as it was following the completion of his four-year, $52 million deal, the already aging Yankees team may not be eager to re-sign the 35-year-old designated hitter, who has been slowed by injured knees.

In a free agent, Matsui, a national icon dubbed Godzilla back home, he will undoubtedly be of interest to some teams. Whether the Yankees will be one of them remains unclear.

The slugger came to New York in 2003 after 10 seasons with the Yomiuri Giants. Another Asian player to win World Series MVP honors, Matsui belted a two-run homer, and hit a two-run double and was run single to lead New York to the championship in their first season in the new Yankee Stadium.

Andy Pettitte, pitching on three days' rest, registered his second victory of the series, outwitting his major league record-for-career postseason-winner 10.

When closer Mariano Rivera gave Shane Victorino's ground to second for the final out, the Yankees gathered into the middle of the diamond for a group hug and stacked the outfield holding championship banners aloft to salute the record of more than 50,000.

Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig presented the championship trophy. "This is their 27th World Series championship, the most in American sports," he said.

The proud wave of approval when Selig announced Matsui as MVP of the series.

"It's awesome," Matsui said through an interpreter after receiving the MVP trophy. "It's just unbelievable. I'm surprised myself."

Matsui put the Yankees in front 2-0 in the second inning with a towering two-run homer into the second deck in right field beyond the Russian Japanese manufacturer sign.

Matsui capped off his remarkable night with a long double to right-center for two more runs in the fifth that gave New York a cushion protected by relievers John Chamberlain, Damaso Marte and Rivera, who registered the last five outs.

The Phillies, who managed just six hits, scored in the third when catcher Carlos Ruiz belted a triple to left-center and came home on a swallow fly by Jimmy Rollins to make it 2-1.

Ryan Howard's two-run homer in the sixth off Pettitte made it 7-3 but New York's bullpen shut them down.

Pettitte, along with captain Derek Jeter, catcher Jorge Posada and Rivera, were members of four World Series-winning teams with the Yankees from 1996 to 2000. Reuters

New York's 27th heaven

Yankees dethrone Phillies as world champions

NEW YORK—THE NEW YORK YANKees beat the Philadelphia Phillies 7-3 to win the World Series on Wednesday, Bo Bruers Bombers crushing a nine-year wait for a 27th title with a 4-2 series victory over the defending champions.

Hideki Matsui was named Most Valuable Player after batting .615 with three home runs and eight RBIs over the series, the Japanese slugger driving in the runs in Wednesday's clincher to tie the World Series record for most RBIs in one game.

Matsui's virtuoso performance matched the mark set by Yankee second baseman Bobby Richardson in 1960.

In becoming the first Japanese and Asian player to win World Series MVP honors, Matsui belted a two-run homer, and hit a two-run double and was run single to lead New York to the championship in their first season in the new Yankee Stadium.

Andy Pettitte, pitching on three days' rest, registered his second victory of the series, outwitting his major league record-for-career postseason-winner 10.

When closer Mariano Rivera gave Shane Victorino's ground to second for the final out, the Yankees gathered into the middle of the diamond for a group hug and stacked the outfield holding championship banners aloft to salute the record of more than 50,000.

Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig presented the championship trophy. "This is their 27th World Series championship, the most in American sports," he said.

The proud wave of approval when Selig announced Matsui as MVP of the series.

"It's awesome," Matsui said through an interpreter after receiving the MVP trophy. "It's just unbelievable. I'm surprised myself."

Matsui put the Yankees in front 2-0 in the second inning with a towering two-run homer into the second deck in right field beyond the Russian Japanese manufacturer sign.

Matsui capped off his remarkable night with a long double to right-center for two more runs in the fifth that gave New York a cushion protected by relievers John Chamberlain, Damaso Marte and Rivera, who registered the last five outs.

The Phillies, who managed just six hits, scored in the third when catcher Carlos Ruiz belted a triple to left-center and came home on a swallow fly by Jimmy Rollins to make it 2-1.

Ryan Howard's two-run homer in the sixth off Pettitte made it 7-3 but New York's bullpen shut them down.

Pettitte, along with captain Derek Jeter, catcher Jorge Posada and Rivera, were members of four World Series-winning teams with the Yankees from 1996 to 2000. Reuters

Magic eclipse Suns; Lakers down Rockets

ORLANDO, FLORIDA—RYAN ANDERSON had 20 and 10 rebounds and Dwight Howard scored 20 as the short-handed Orlando Magic defeated the previously unbeaten Phoenix Suns 122-110 in the NBA on Wednesday.

Playing without injured Vince Carter and suspended Rashard Lewis, the Magic built a 22-point lead in the third quarter to pull away from the Suns.

Stuart Duckworth finished with 21 points and 14 rebounds for Phoenix, which was looking to match the 1984 team for the franchise's best start through five games.

At Houston, Kobe Bryant scored 42 points and Andrew Bynum added 17 points and 17 rebounds as Los Angeles won its overtime for the seventh straight game, beating Houston, 103-101.

Carl Landry scored 20 points to lead six players in double figures for Houston. Luis Scola added 16 points and 13 rebounds and Chuck Hayes had 14 points and 14 rebounds.

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Chauncey Billups and Carmelo Anthony broke up an honest Denver in a 61-point third quarter as the Nuggets routed the New Jersey Nets, 122-91, and continue their best start since 1985.

The win was the fifth straight for Denver, one day of the 1985 start, and it handed winless New Jersey a 50th straight loss, tying the worst start in team history set in 1996.

At Minneapolis, Kevin Garnett had 12 points and 11 rebounds in his third game back in Minnesota since he was traded in 2007, helping Boston remain undefeated with a 92-86 victory over the Timberwolves.

NEW Orleans' Chris Paul (right) and Bobby Jones do the hangin-a win over Dallas.

Najee Rondo scored 14 of his 16 points in the third quarter for the Celtics (6-0), who joined the Denver Nuggets as the only two teams in the league without a loss.

COMPLETE RESULTS: Miami 122, Pacific 102; Miami 122, Boston 92; Seattle 110, Denver 92; San Antonio 103, Memphis 88; LA Lakers 103, Houston 101 (OT); New Orleans 114, Dallas 107 (OT); Atlanta 111, Sacramento 102; Golden State 110, Minnesota 96. Reuters

Watney up with 64; Woods 3 off

SHANGHAI—NICK WATNEY FIRED AN eight-under par 64 to race into a two-shot lead after the opening round of the WGC-HSBC Champions on Thursday, the American just missing out on the course record with a bogey at his final hole.

Germany Martin Kaymer, Ireland's Shane Lowry and American Ryan Moore share second after matching 66s, while world number one Tiger Woods was a stroke further adrift in joint 6th after a solid 67.

While most eyes were on Woods and world number two Phil Mickelson, it was Watney who dominated the leaderboard for most of a balmy day at the $7 million tournament.

The Californian had already pitched up two shots ahead of the field at 30-plus years for an eagle three at his fifth hole and added five more birdies to go nine under with five bogeys-free.

American Anthony Kim, British Paul Casey and Taiwan's Lin Wen-tang matched Woods' score but 2007 champion Mickelson joined four birdies on his front nine with a single bogey on his way home to shoot a 68. Reuters

Aces seek 6th straight vs BK

By Mayong B. Castillo

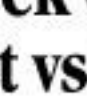
BAR ALASKA COACH TERRY CONE MAY HAVE explained it well enough, one would actually think that he did not know what he was talking about.

"We're a mixed playing team that some is games with hard fans on and lunch hours in their hands and are ready to work hard," Cone said Wednesday night after his Aces stayed on top of the BPC/PBA Philippine Cup lineup at 5-0 with victory over the Bolters.

Cone was referring to another tough game at 5 p.m. today at the Cuneta Astrodome, where the Aces cling it out with the hard-nosed, veteran laden Barangay Ginebra Kings.

"I'd rather play star-studded teams like Ginebra and San Miguel," he said. "I hate playing teams like that, especially Barger King, reliable player tough and physical class they sometimes get under your skin."

"They (Kings) are have no superstars, and because of that, they work hard every night and we are not an athletic team (than matches up well with that."



In the sidelines, Cone's aces take his second against Rankin Bolt at 7:30, with the Kings out to the to 3-1.

Meanwhile, Gerry Cole dugs it out with national development team Smart Gilas in a no-holding contest at 2:30 p.m.

Gilas is one of three teams with a win-undrawn off their marks after the 9th declared the Great Gilas game no-brainer.

The boys are in their finest start in 11 years, or since the 1998 All-Filipino, when they jumped out of the gates with the same pose only to lose their sixth assignment.

Alaska is strongest at the backcourt with Willie Miller and Lit Tenorio holding fort. Incidentally, this is where the Hillsdpot's are weakest after losing Wynne Arboleda for the rest of the season after streaking a hip.

Fernando ties for HK Am lead

MANIL FERNANDO, THE REIGNING NATIONAL amateur champion, fired a 6-under-par 66 yesterday to join Japanese Ryo Ishikawa at the top of the first round going into the final 18 holes of the Hong Kong Open Amateur at the Discovery Bay Golf Club course.

The 27-year-old ace of PAL Interclub champion Candabong gunned a 34 hole round of 2014 to tie Australian Daniel Nieber, who shot a 66.

Daniel Alaban, the other Filipino bet, submitted the 36-hole score of 70-73 and moved up to second, just a stroke behind at 213, in a tie with Iseli bet Imamine de Lucy.

In Lucy matched Nieber's 66 to make it a four-some tie for the lead round today.

Steven Lam also stayed in the chase at 217 after a 71, while Lester Pimentel stood at 219 after a 74 followed by Singapore's Jonson Ng (69-221) and Lars Dwijaya (73-221).

Fernando and Alaba are passing up the next month's MA Games in Laos where they will be joined by Antonio Imaza II and Dalton Bayron.

Mayong B. Castillo

Fiery Tigresses eye sweep vs Lady Stags

UNIVERSITY OF Santo Tomas gains for its eliminations round sweep against old rival San Sebastian today in the Shakey's-V League Season 6 second conference at the FEOI Flying V arena in Sta. Rosa.

The 4 p.m. game marks the first time the two powerhouse squads will meet since the Tigresses topped the Lady Stags for the first conference title last June.

Some of the Lady Stags' stars, including Lou Anne Lastimosa and Sisa Bernardino, are no longer around, giving the Tigresses a slight edge in the last game of the triple-bill ending the eliminations.

A victory by San Sebastian would create a three-way tie among the Tigresses, the Lady Stags and the Lady Stags heading into the triangle-quarterfinal phase of the league sponsored by Shakey's Pizza and backed by Milcas, Accel, Mighty Bond and Omicron.

The records of the quarterfinalists will be carried over to the next phase.

Winless Letran University of the Philippines and Lyceum clash in the first game at 2 p.m., while Arellano Chevron and Adamson brush their tie for fourth place at 4.

The Tigresses, who ruled the University Games in Iloilo, are coming off a straight-set victory over IU Bombo last Tuesday.

The Lady Stags, in contrast, survived Adamson in four sets.

Gerald P. Santos

POC blinks, pleads for more PSC cash

By Jane Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC Committee made a final disappointed plea yesterday for the Philippine Sports Commission to shoulder the expenses of the entire 300-man RP delegation to the Southeast Asian Games in Laos this December.

POC deputy secretary general Al Panlilio said the appeal was focused on the PSC's funding of the additional 86 athletes and 86 support staff and officials the Olympic body submitted to the Laos SEAG Organizing Committee on Monday.

"We have asked the PSC to fund all the members of the Philippine team, based on the selection made by each NSA (national sports association) in accordance with the POC's criteria," said Joaquin.

The PSC had earlier committed to bankroll the participation of only 132 athletes and 67 officials in the Dec. 9 to 18 Games based on the criteria of gold and silver medal performances in the 2007 Thailand Games.

But the POC picked up the tab with 186 more athletes and officials and promised to raise funds from the private sector to finance their participation.

In Bandung, PSA Arena, POC spokesperson Joey Romasanta declared that the local Olympic body had raised 75 percent of the estimated P6.61 million needed to fund the extra SEAG entries.

"The POC is there to fund our programs, including international competitions," said Joaquin, also the president of the Philippine Aquatic Sports Association. "Let it deny funding if they want, but they should have good reasons."

POC chair Peter Angping remained firm, however, on the agency's decision to shoulder the participation expenses of only those who qualified based on the standards formulated by the PSC and RP-bid the mission Made Technologies.

The breakdown of the 253 athletes are as follows:

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DID YOU KNOW

THERE are 10,111 inmates in Metro Manila prisons, as of June. Of this number, 48 are minors.
Cyril L. Belaluna
Inquirer Research

CHARGES BASED ON DISSATISFIED PATIENT'S COMPLAINT

NBI files 4 cases vs Belo

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF Investigation yesterday filed criminal cases against Dr. Vicki Belo and two doctors of the Belo Medical Group (BMG) after a former patient complained that she nearly died after undergoing butt enhancement surgery in Belo's clinic.

Belo, Dr. Ronaldo Cayetano and Dr. Fernin Dacanglicos were all charged with reckless imprudence resulting in serious physical injuries.

On top of this, Belo was also charged with estafa, tax evasion, and [making] false, deceptive or misleading advertisements under the Consumer Act.

The cases were based on a complaint filed against Belo and company by Josefina Norcio, a businesswoman, who said she developed an infection after Cayetano injected hydrogel into her buttocks in 2002.

The NBI filed the charges in Norcio's behalf after its investigation showed that hydrogel contains acrylonitrile, a poisonous substance.

Positive for 'acrolein'

"Sample specimens taken from [Norcio] was examined by the Forensic Chemistry Division and yielded positive results for acrolein and [an]," it said.

In her affidavit, Norcio said she decided to undergo butt augmentation surgery after Belo allegedly assured her that the procedure was "perfectly safe."

The surgery was performed by Cayetano but Norcio said she was dissatisfied with the results as one cheek was bigger than the other. In 2003, she underwent a corrective-al procedure, this time performed by Dr. Dacanglicos.

In May this year, Norcio said she was admitted to St. Luke's Medical Center for pain in her backside. Doctors later found out that she had developed an infection because of the hydrogel in her body.

Rizie Angeles, the businesswoman's lawyer, said her client had to undergo six operations to get the hydrogel out of her buttocks.

"Were it not for this timely medical intervention, she could have died as a result of [the] infection caused by hydrogel," the NBI said.

According to the bureau, they charged Belo with estafa for "misrepresenting to Norcio that hydrogel was perfectly safe when its truth and in fact, it is not."

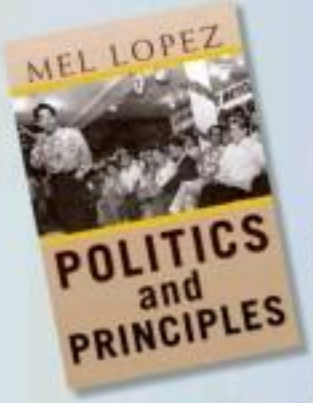
Deceptive advertisement

The controversial doctor to the stars, the NBI added, was likewise liable for deceptive advertisement because she claimed that hydrogel was perfectly safe to use in her augmentation procedures.

It explained that the charge of tax evasion was due to Belo's alleged practice of not issuing official receipts to her patients.

The three doctors, meanwhile, were liable for reckless imprudence because "they

NBI, A24



Ninoy Aquino personally asked Mel Lopez to run for Mayor in the '80 elections, citing the importance that an individual with unquestionable integrity and loyalty to the opposition should carry the party banner in the crucial political contest in Manila.

The Filipino people's glorious quest culminated with the world famous EDSA Revolution—a testament to the heroism of Filipinos and their commitment to freedom and democracy.

MEL LOPEZ
POLITICS and PRINCIPLES

Highlights the mission of Mel Lopez to regain freedom, justice and democracy lost during martial law—attacking President Ferdinand Marcos' rule for committing "three cardinal sins" (the three K's) against the people—*kriminalidad, katiwalian at kalupitan* (criminality, lying, and betrayal of public trust).

As Manila Mayor, Mel Lopez made record achievements, and stood his ground that gambling in any form is evil and that nothing could make up for the damage gambling could inflict upon the morals of the people, especially the youth. He closed the casinos and *jai-alai* and was jailed for it.

Because of his anti-gambling stance, Mel Lopez had to forego the monthly P4.5 million financial help that PAGCOR was giving.

Mel questioned the constitutionality of P.D. 824 creating Metro Manila Commission and petitioned the Supreme Court for the restoration of local legislative bodies of 4 cities and 13 municipalities in Metro Manila. And to abolish the MMC.

In 1984, as an Assemblyman, Mel Lopez moved from streets to plazas, from colleges to universities, to denounce the abuses of the undemocratic Marcos regime and urge the people to liberate the nation from oppressive martial rule.

The book will be available this December; for inquiries, please call 3739912 and 3719926 or send email to gil9411@yahoo.com.

Arrested suspect in mall rob could turn state witness

By Jeannette I. Andrade and Erika Sauler

A MEMBER OF THE NOYPINE alias Alvin Flores Gang arrested recently for his alleged participation in a 2007 robbery could be used as a state witness against his companions, according to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

NBI Deputy Director for Intelligence Service Nestor Mantaring said last week that Jamela could qualify as a state witness, but added that what the suspect would have to say would be valuable in the continuing operation against gang members still at large.

Buricutela was arrested during a raid in Cebu province on Oct. 29 by NBI teams from the Task Force Against Armed Robbery Group, the Counter-Terrorism Service and Surveillance Division and the General Vicente Region-al Office.

During the raid in a Compostela town resort, Flores and three of his men, Rubin Gigante Filipino, Mate Alejandro Bordon Guinamaya and Roger Bandoja, were killed in a shootout with NBI agents.

Lasala added that the NBI in-tiative to the domestic Cry-based doctor who allegedly orchestrated plastic surgery on Flores was given almost to ask him if he was privy to the group's activities.

In a television interview, Buricutela also revealed that the matches stolen from the Greenbelt 5 robbery were already sold in Bulacan province.

Buricutela was charged on Tuesday with robbery with homicide in the Makati City Prosecutor's Office.

Meanwhile, two other gang members who admitted their had participated in several robberies, including the shooting of her companions from a video footage shown yesterday at the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO).

Dennis Incapilla was nabbed in his house in Pangasinan on Oct. 23, while Jose Medina Rodriguez surrendered to police on Nov. 2.

The Alvin Flores gang had been linked to the robbery of a florist store in Greenbelt 5 mall in Makati City on Dec. 18.

Police records showed that the group staged 54 robberies in 2009 and 37 in 2008, in Metro Manila and nearby provinces. (See sidebar.)

NCRPO chief Director Roberto Rosales said a case could be filed against San Nicolas (Dan-gasinan) Mayor Leonardo Estrella III for allegedly harboring crime suspects. Incapilla and Rodriguez reportedly worked as security escorts of the mayor. One alleged member of the gang, Jay se Saldivar, a report-edly a cousin of the town execu-tive.

Rosales said the two suspects did not say that Saldivar par-took of their loot, but added that the pair headed to the mayor's house after staging a robbery. Police are still investigating whether or not Saldivar had prior knowledge of the gang's operations, he said.

Chief Supt. Ramon Calisi, director of Police Regional Office 1, said Flores was brought in to the suspect's home after he was identified in an armored van robbery incident at the University of the Philippines in Diliman City.

The mayor denied knowing Flores, saying he thought the injured man was just wounded in a bar fight, Garan said.

14 heists linked to gang

BASED ON A REPORT SUBmitted by Senior Insp. Joselito Batocabe, chief of the counterintelligence branch in the National Capital Region Police Office, the following heists were carried out by the Alvin Flores gang this year:

1. Multinational Mall in Pasay-anga in March;
2. Sunstar Mall in Dau-Cruz, Laguna, on March 30;
3. Philamlife Homebuyers in Mla-gnik, Intramuros, Cavite, on May 19;
4. SM Sprees Mall, particularly Robinson's Supermarket, Malabon City, on April 5;
5. STM Compound on Samat Street in Barangay Sauces, Pasig City, on April 23;
6. GSC Compound in Potrero, Malabon City, on May 9;
7. Sark Trade Building on Investment Drive, Filinvest in Alabang, Muntinlupa City, on May 25;
8. Union Bank and Gallery Cafe Station on Urbano Plaza Street, Cubao in City, on May 30;
9. Union Bank on Ayala-ka Street, Barangay San Lorenzo Village in Makati City on June 9;
10. and Memorial base of the Sanctum Lumen Expressway in Barangay Pulanlo, Muntinlupa City on June 17;
11. Splash Complex on Marcos-phon, Pasig City, on May 30;
12. Robinsons in Quezon City on Sept. 13;
13. Harrison Plaza in Malate, Manila, on Sept. 29;
14. Robin store in Greenbelt 3 mall in Makati City on Oct. 18 . . . Erika Sauler

NBI . . .

From page A20

trial; not someone some dis-gruntled employee in the operations," the NBI said in its complaint.

BMG statement

Contacted for comment, BMG, through its spokesperson, Leah Salmorin, said in a text message to the Inquirer:

"The Belo Medical Group remains perplexed by these continued allegations being leveled against us in the media by the counsel of Mrs. Nicerio. As in this point, we have not received a single complaint, except for a demand letter issuing (sic) the immediate payment of P200 million. It was only after our refusal to pay that Mrs. Nicerio's group instituted their (attacks) in media. In fact, all their press statements have been unsubstantiated and devoid of any proof. On the other hand, it is undeniable that so many things could have happened to the spate of her long years. Moreover, the scrips presented in Mrs. Nicerio's footnotes could not have possibly taken that long to manifest. Even the supposed laboratory findings they themselves advertised to media do not constitute the word 'hydrogel' much less support their claims in any way."

40TH DAY

Protesters and typhoon-in-duru on Wednesday mark the 40th day since Tropical Storm "Ondoy" struck the country, leaving a huge part of Metro Manila inundated in floodwaters. They commemorated the occasion by letting a mock coffin float in the Marikina River. Marikina was one of the cities in the metropolis severely affected by the storm on Sept. 26. AP

Woman tagged as rob gang's fence arrested in Caloocan

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A WOMAN TAGGED BY THE police as the financier and fence of a robbery group operating in Metro Manila and nearby provinces was arrested on Wednesday afternoon in Caloocan City.

Supt. Proceso Lipana, San Juan police chief, identified the woman as Alicia Caronido, a resident of 1729 Lapulapu Compound in Barangay 8, Caloocan City.

Lipana said Caronido, also known as "Mommy," was tagged as the fence of the Ramos-Sumerano robbery group which burglarized a house in San Juan City recently.

He added that they got their information from a member of the group.

"She was positively identified by one of its members who provided details for us which led to her arrest," Lipana said.

Other aides said of selling the stolen materials, "So-added.

Lipana said a search warrant for Caronido's house, which was authorized by a warrant issued by a Manila Regional Trial Court judge, yielded four firearms, airline tickets and a passport with a valid US visa.

According to the police official, the group's modus operandi consisted of forcing their way into the houses they target and tying up the household members before making off with the victims' cash and valuables.

Lipana said that aside from robbery and illegal possession of firearms, Caronido would also be charged with violating the antifencing law.

New safety procedures in malls face test

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A SIMULATED ARMED ROBbery will be conducted today in a Muntinlupa City mall to see new procedures formulated separately by the Philippine National Police and security heads of various business establishments in eastern Metro Manila.

Supt. Antonio Yarra, Eastern Police District Intelligence and Investigation Division head, said more than a thousand policemen will participate in the activity.

"We will test the security procedures and measures formulated by both groups and evaluate its effectiveness," he said.

The results of the exercise will provide insights on how to improve on preventive measures employed in cases of armed robbery, particularly in crowded areas, Yarra added.

Another objective was to assess the capability of security personnel of business establishments in dealing with high-pressure threats.

Yarra said security personnel have recently taken refresher courses on various safety measures, including what to do during emergency situations and conducting routine bag inspections.

Seminars are also ongoing involving the exchange of information and procedures on dealt safety between police and security forces of business establishments in the metropolis, the police official added.

WRONG SIDE UP

A Honda Civic ends up upside down after it rammed a portion of the center island on Magsaysay Bridge, Manila, before midnight yesterday. Bystanders rushed the injured driver to a nearby hospital.

Coca-Cola & McDonald's bring back the Contour Glass in Color

With just a little touch of color, we express a multitude of things. Little life. Love wants red to glow with burning passion in much the same way Mr. Good Cheer makes rainy days sunshiny as he goes about. In a variety of multihued ways, color satisfies all our little, complex and sometimes contradictory emotions as well.

World-renowned beverage brand and the country's foremost symbol of happiness, Coca-Cola and leading global fast-food chain retailer Mc-Donald's partnered for more than 50 years, know just how important it is to add a splash of color to the life of nearly 7 Filipinos. That is why this years' prime sponsorship partnership that gave the world the flagship 2008 Coca-Cola Contour Olympic glasses, bring back the Coca-Cola Contour Glasses, this time with a localized colorful twist. Giving everyone a whole new reasons to open happiness and keep them! It was more, the contour glasses were also launched in Pink, Green, Blue, Lime, Charcoal and Purple, each one meant to suit every individual's unique personality.

Developed from the Coca-Cola Contour Bottle, one of the most recognizable and celebrated icons in the world, the iconic, curvaceous edition designs take with them the sparkling spirit of fun and positivity, true to each brands' ethos, ensuring that for every favorite character there surely is one.

With the grand arrival of the iconic collectible items, the young, the old and those in between alike are once again invited to the ultimate drinking experience, to open happiness and to create that fun moment to flaunt and match their vibrant personas with the colored Coca-Cola contour glass that perfectly suit them. Love sharing or fun if you game it with or it's secret? This is the time to grab the glass that matches your personality and versatile. "Gawin mo 'Meron'd". Additionally pursuant up and hat' with the gang's fill, or bits. Share? Recycle the biodegradable and sterilized. "Purple the Rapper". A true blue commercial artist with amazing leadership brand? Maybe you are the confident and creating "Lime the Leader".

Always the makers' spark or fun through stirs hang-days times? We may just be the outgoing and naturally inquisitive. "Find the Sparks" is real-size with never before for anything less than what you truly want? Are you the "Charcoal the Artist"? The glass that you that keeps everyone happily clicking with one another no matter what? You're without doubt the friendly and loyal. "Wear the Blue".

For for lovers who want to be sure what colored Coca-Cola contour glass to use as favorite, an exciting "Personality Fun Test" is available online at http://www.contourfavorite.com. After attending a language simply click on "Rate of Perfection", answer all nine questions and "spin the Coca-Cola bottle" to reveal your true color.

Collect and enjoy your limited edition Summer Coca-Cola Contour Glasses now! Just add P25 with any McDonald's Extra Value Meal in any McDonald's branch now up to December 6 (c). 2009 Chelsea Promo Mechanics. See posters and print ads for details.

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Gang leader pleads not guilty

THE ALLEGED leader of a gang allegedly involved in several drive-by shootings in Manila that pleaded not guilty to two counts of murder and illegal possession of high-powered firearms before Judge Silvino Pampilo Jr. of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 28. He pleaded not guilty to the murder of Jose Bryan Lorenzana, 15, and Ricky Manalo, 21, both were shot dead on Aug. 3 last year as they were watching fiesta from a friend's house. Their companion, Vincent Sorders, survived the attack which was carried out by two men riding a motorcycle. During the arraignment, a court employee said that when the police arrested Encinas' handcuffs, several people—including the alleged—moved away from him so not out of the court room. The several police officers personally told the lawyers that most of the people in court were obviously afraid of Encinas. Their reaction prompted Pampilo to order the police to assign more men to secure Encinas. His Trial Pantilan Gang was earlier linked to several incidents of radio-motorcade shooting in the past two years which were carried out by motorcycle-riding men between 1 a.m. and 4 a.m. with the victims chosen at random.

Jeannette I. Andrade

A CHRISTMAS LIKE NO OTHER

More than shopping, dining, and entertainment, Araneta Center takes pride in giving Filipinos a memorable leisure experience with every visit. This Yuletide season, the pioneer lifestyle hub brings back the magic of Christmas with events and offerings that are sure to keep you coming back for more.

Giant Christmas Tree Lighting

Today, a time-honored Christmas tradition will take place right in the heart of the metro — the well-loved and much-anticipated lighting of the Giant Christmas Tree at the Araneta Center.

Since 1981, the Giant Christmas Tree at the Araneta Center, inspired by the Rockefeller Center's Giant Christmas Tree in New York, has served as the city's most popular Christmas icon with the traditional lighting ceremony, officially signaling the start of Yuletide festivities in the city.

At 5:30 PM today, all roads will lead to Araneta Center once again as the hottest stars from ABS-CBN join the festive Giant Christmas Tree Lighting.

All New Disney On Ice Opens Christmas Day!

Be prepared to be a kid again when world-renowned Disney On Ice opens at the Araneta Coliseum on December 25!

In a brand new show, Disney On Ice presents a Disneyland Adventure invites audiences to relive their favorite Disneyland memories, as they join favorite characters and classic villains on a colorful and exciting vacation to the theme park.

The never-before-seen adventure features an array of favorite Disney characters, including Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald Goofy, Pluto, Baloo, Disney Princesses Snow White and Cinderella, Stitch, The Incredibles and Buzz Lightyear.

Make this Christmas truly magical! Buy your tickets now to avoid the Christmas rush. For reservations call Ticketnet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph.

Mickey & pals take the Jungle Cruise

A Magical Christmas Promo with Disney On Ice

Experience a magical Christmas with Araneta Center's Disney On Ice promo starting today until December 25! 10 lucky patrons will win 4 VIP tickets to Disney On Ice shows.

Just shop, dine, watch a movie, and get the chance to be one of 10 winners in Araneta Center's magical Christmas promo with Disney On Ice.

To know more about these and other events & promos at Araneta Center, log on to www.aranetacenter.net

Dancing to the classics

Araneta Center
aranetacenter.net

Tuloy pa rin ang Pasko!

Watch the Araneta Center Giant Christmas Tree Lighting

Today at 5:30pm / Araneta Coliseum Parking

Featuring a star studded line-up of ABS-CBN talents including Nikki Gil, Anne Curtis, Rachelle Ann Go, Iya Villania, Karylle, Erik Santos, Gretchen Barretto, Jericho Rosales, Shaina Magdayao, Zaijan Jaranilla (Sandino), Maja Salvador & many more!

Gateway • Ali Mall • Farmers Plaza • Farmers Market • Araneta Coliseum • SM Shopwise • Cyberpark • Supercenter • Manhattan Garden City (coming)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MMDA

Ika - 34 n
Anibersaryo ng
ng M

Novembe

Tema : *ONDOY : Hara*
Tuloy ang

Marikina Noon...

Marikina Ngayon...

Dalawang araw makaraang hagupitin ng kagyong Ondoy ang Kamaynilaan at mga karatig-bayan nitong Setyembre 26, dali-daling sumaklolo ang MMDA, sa pamumuno ni Chairman Bayani Fernando, sa Marikina City, na nagtamo ng pinakamabigat na pinsala na dulot ng matinding pagbaha.

Napatunayang muli ng MMDA na sa sama-samang pagkilos, ang tila hindi malalapos na gawain ay makakayang kalkatin. Sa loob lamang ng 30 araw ay wala na ang mga basura at putik na naggalaklag sa Marikina, isang patunay na walang hindi maaaring abutin kung may POLITICAL WILL.

SA GITNA NG MATINDING PINSALA NA IDINULOT NI BA
BAYAN, MULI NA NAMAN NATING PINATUNAYAN NA TAY
AT SUMUSUNOD SA BATAS AY MADALING NAKAKABANG

ITO ANG TINATAWAG NA POLITICAL WILL. ANUMAN A
KINAKAILANGAN PA RIN NATING KUMILOS, MAGKA
MAKABANGON.

HUWAG KAYONG MAG-ALALA. KINAYA NATIN ANG BAGS
NA DARATING, DAHIL MAYROON TAYONG PAMAHALAAN
KAYO AY TULUNGAN SA KAHIT ANO PA MANG TRAHEDY

SA INYO AY TUNAY NA NAGMAMAHAL,
MGA NAMUMUNO AT KAWANI
NG MMDA

na Taong
g Pagkakatatag
MMDA

er 7, 2009

apin ang Pagsubok . . .
Pagsulong

METRO GWAPO
TAO-GANADO

GYONG ONDOY SA KALAKHANG MAYNILA AT KARATIG-ONG MGA PILIPINO, BASTA'T NAGKAKAISA, DISIPLINADO ON MULA SA MATINDING PAGKAKALUGMOK.

ANG ATING HINAGPIS AT KALUNGKUTANG NADARAMA AISA AT MAGTULUNGAN UPANG TAYO AY MULING

K NI ONDOY, KAYA NATIN KAHIT ANUMANG PAGSUBOK G NAGMAMAHAL AT MAY SAPAT NA KAKAYAHAN UPANG A AT KAGIPITAN.

CHAIRMAN BAYANI F. FERNANDO

Sa Ibang Panig ng Bansa . . .

MAY 2009. PANGASINAN. Isandaang mang-gagawa at mga makabagong kagamitan ang dinala ng MMDA sa Alaminos City at apat na bayan sa Pangasinan – Bolinao, Bani, Anda, at Agno upang linisin at kumpunihin ang mga sirang lansangan, inprastraktura, at mga kabe-bayang sinalanta ng bagyong Emong

JULY 2009. ILOILO. Milyon naman ng mga kawani ng MMDA ang daanang lubig na baraso sa paligid ng Iloilo Domestic Airport at mga karatig-pook na apektado ng bagyong Frank.

JUNE 2009. KALIBO, AKLAN. Inayos naman ng mga eksportong kagawad ng MMDA ang mga bumagsak na poste ng ilaw at mga kable ng kuryente.

Neighbors of alleged US serial killer 'smelt bodies'

Suzuki showcases SX4-FCV at Tokyo Motor Show

Suzuki Swift Plug-in Hybrid also on display

At one of only a handful of integrated mobility companies worldwide, Suzuki Motor showcased a full range of alternative fuel vehicles at the recently concluded Tokyo Motor Show. Bringing together automobiles, motorcycles, power-assisted vehicles, and electric-powered fuels under the theme "small cars for a big future", Suzuki highlighted its future-oriented initiatives to realize eco-friendly lifestyle possibilities.

Suzuki SX4-FCV: The Suzuki SX4-FCV combines a high-performance fuel cell with a high-pressure 70MPa hydrogen tank. Instead of a battery pack, the SX4-FCV has a lightweight capacitor that promotes driving performance by recovering energy during brake application and using it to reduce fuel-cell load during accelerations. With an estimated driving range of 200km, the Suzuki SX4-FCV is a front-engine, front-wheel drive sedan with seating capacity for 5 adults. Already certified for on-road testing by the Japanese government, the Suzuki SX4-FCV is being readied for commercial production.

Suzuki Swift Plug-in Hybrid - The Suzuki Swift Plug-in Hybrid is designed primarily to run driven on electric power for short commutes of about 20km daily. For short distance travel, the Suzuki Swift Plug-in Hybrid is powered by a battery that's charged from an ordinary household electric socket. When the battery runs low, a lightweight gasoline-fueled generator kicks in to recharge the battery. The back-up power source saves users the worry of being stranded or having to search for a charging stand when the battery runs out. The Fast-Attack hybrid has a 5-person seating capacity.

Suzuki Research & Development - Tasked with "creating a new value to the next generation", Suzuki R&D focuses on developing value-packed products that will meet the changing lifestyles of the future. Applying this philosophy to its development efforts, Suzuki R&D covers a wide range of the latest advances in such fields as energy, environment, electronics, communications, information and control applications.

SUZUKI | Way of Life!

CLEVELAND—NEIGHBORS OF alleged US serial killer Anthony Sowell had apparently complained about a bad smell for years, but many believed it was coming from a sewage/heating/unit door.

The 50-year-old convicted rapist was arraigned Wednesday on a string of murder charges in Ohio, a judge examined the prosecution to require of up to 11 bodies unearthed at his home in Cleveland, Ohio.

Local councilman Jack Reed said he would push for an independent investigation into why complaints about the smell didn't lead to a broader discovery.

"Residents are mad and they have every right to be mad," he told AFP.

Reed said his office called the public health department about ten and a half years ago or a neighbor reported the smell. He was, stated whether an earlier intervention could have prevented some of the murders.

"I know darned well that our health department should have been able to tell the difference between the smell of a dead body and the smell of dead meat," he told AFP.

At the arraignment hearing, defense lawyer argued unsuccessfully that Sowell should be granted bail as he had a heart condition that required him to wear a pacemaker and had other undefined medical problems.

Prosecutors were adamant the alleged serial killer, who has already served a 15-year sentence behind bars for a 1989 rape, should continue to be kept under lock and key.

"The same man who has an incredibly dangerous threat to the public," assistant county prosecutor Brian Murphy told the hearing.

A frail-looking Sowell stayed straight ahead as judge Ronald Adrine set bail at $2 million and ordered him to be held pending trial on five charges of aggravated murder. He said he is expected further charges to follow.

"After 26 years on the bench, this is without question the most serious set of allegations I've ever faced," said Adrine, refusing bail due to the "gruesome nature" of the crimes and the defendant's criminal history.

The horrific murders came to light last Thursday when police went to Sowell's home to question him on unrelated rape and assault charges for a September attack on a woman who escaped.

Sowell was led in his bed behind police discovered the decomposing bodies of six women over two days in the house and yard.

Police were reportedly found setting in the back garden with other remains inside the house. Investigators unearthed four more bodies and a skull at the property on Tuesday, bringing the total number of victims to a possible 11.

"We have located 10 bodies and a single skull," Cleveland police spokesperson Thomas Stanko told AFP. "It is not known yet if the skull is an 11th victim."

The first six bodies to have all been identified as African-American women and coroners are working on the rest and two of the men with the help of an anthropologist from a local museum. At least five of the women were strangled.

Three of the victims have not yet been formally identified and earlier in the week received family members clasped photos of missing loved ones outside the Sowell house, fearing the worst.

Sowell was arrested on Saturday after a local resident recognized him walking down the street and notified police. He did not appear to resist arrest.

Neighbors said he family had lived for many years at the relatively well-kept home in Imperial Avenue, where he had returned in 2006 after being released from prison.

Police said they planned to search vacant buildings within a half-mile radius of Sowell's home, looking for additional bodies.

Sowell's case will now be forwarded to a grand jury. He faces a possible death penalty if found guilty. /AFP

SOWELL

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A world first: Miracle Aussie baby beats rare brain condition

MELBOURNE—A "MIRACLE" AUSTRALIAN baby has become the first person cured of a rare and deadly brain-melting condition after doctors gambled on an experimental drug tested only on mice, they said Thursday.

The child, known only as "Baby J," was facing a painful death of seizures and brain damage from methylmalonic aciduria deficiency, a genetic defect which causes a buildup of toxic sulphite and usually kills in months.

But after just one round of therapy, recovery just three days after first being given the miracle treatment which was flown in from Germany and rushed through the courts.

"We are looking at her now and she is just an absolute miracle... she has defied every body" fact mother, who cannot be named for legal reasons, told reporters.

Baby J started "losing ground" within 60 hours of her birth in May 2008, prompting her family to appeal to biochemist Bob Gunsalus to help treat the previously incurable condition which affects just one in a million Australians.

"There was courage and there was determination but we feared for courage," the mother said. "If she wasn't treated she would die a very painful death."

Baby J's doctor Alex Wellman said Gunsalus discovered an experimental drug which had been successfully used on mice by Germany's Gutcher Schwarz, but had never been used on humans.

As Schwarz contacted his cache stock of the compound from Europe in Melbourne, doctors were in a race against time to get ethics approval from the hospital and a court order clearing its use, with Baby J succumbing by the hour.

"The room ... managed to get this therapy from Switzerland in about five weeks, which is unheard of," Wellman said Thursday.

"Within hours of receiving her first dose of the drug, cyclic pyranopterin monophosphate (cPMP), Baby J's sulphite levels plunged by more than two-thirds and were at normal levels within about three days.

Wellman said Baby J's alertness improved and her vomiting ceased rapidly, with her seizures dropping by 90 percent in three weeks.

"The response was just amazing," he told AFP.

"We can trust that is because for the first time in (the history of) mankind...it has the potential to save lives all around the world."

Baby J's development has been slowed by the brain damage she suffered before the treatment, and Wellman said she would need a cPMP injection every day for the rest of her life.

But her mother said the baby now 16 months old, had started speaking and was physically active.

"Every day just gets better and better. We look at her every day and just think, 'Wow,'" she said. /AFP

"BABY J" in photo taken on May 5, ... a process which normally takes several years," Wellman said.

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Paraguayan president dismisses military chiefs

ASUNCION—PARAGUAYAN PRESIDENT Fernando Lugo dismissed the country's three top military commanders on Wednesday, a day after denying rumors of a possible coup amidst growing opposition criticisms of his presidency.

Lugo replaced the heads of the army, navy and air force, a statement from the Armed Forces press office said, in his chief shake-up of the top military command since he came to power a year-and-a-half ago. He made no comment about the decision.

A left-leaning former Roman Catholic bishop, Lugo won the presidency last year, ending more than 60 years of rule by the conservative Colorado Party.

His governing coalition has struggled to push through a reformist agenda and faces until opposition from Colorado lawmakers who control Congress.

Opposition leaders have increased criticisms of Lugo in recent days, accusing him of failing to curb rising crime and calling for an investigation into accusations of improper land sales allegedly involving a presidential aide.

On Tuesday, Lugo denied the threat of a military coup in comments to reporters, but warned of a "small group of military officers" who he said might be siding with his political foes.

According to Paraguayan media reports, the military chiefs no some after Lugo reportedly learned that some high-ranking military officials held meetings with opposition lawmakers over the weekend.

One of South America's poorest countries, Paraguay has been shaken by periodic bouts of political instability and several coup attempts since democracy was restored in 1989 after a 35 year military dictatorship led by Gen. Alfredo Stroessner. /Reuters

Italy convicts 23 CIA agents of abducting cleric

MILAN—IN A LANDMARK RULing, an Italian judge on Wednesday convicted a base chief for the former Soviet intelligence Agency and 22 other Americans, almost all CIA operatives, of kidnapping a Muslim cleric from the streets of Milan in 2003.

The case was a huge symbolic victory for Italian prosecutors, who drew the first convictions involving the American practice of rendition, in which terrorism suspects are captured in one country and taken for questioning in countries where one more open to coercive interrogation techniques.

Critics of the Bush administration have long faulted the case as a repudiation of the tactics it used to fight terrorism. And the fact that Italy would actually convict intelligence agents of an allied country was seen as a bold move that could set a precedent in other cases.

Still, the convictions may have little practical effect. They do not seem to change the close relations between the United States and Italy. Nor did they reveal whether the government of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi had approved the kidnapping, and it seemed highly unlikely that anyone, Italian or American, would spend any time in prison.

Judge Oscar Magi handed an eight-year sentence to Robert Seldon Lady, a former CIA base chief in Milan, and the same sentences to the 22 other Americans, including an air force colonel and 11 CIA operatives. Three of the other high-ranking Americans were given diplomatic immunity, including Jeffrey Castelli, a former CIA station chief in Rome.

Citing state secrets, the judge did not counter four high-ranking Italians charged in the abduction, including a former head of Italian military intelligence, Nicolo Pollari.

All the Americans were tried in absentia and are considered fugitives. Through their court-appointed lawyers, they pleaded not guilty.

Italian prosecutors had charged the Americans and seven members of the Italian military intelligence agency in the abduction of Osama Mustafa Hassan Nasr, known as Abu Omar, on Feb. 17, 2003. Prosecutors said he was snatched in broad daylight, flown from an American air base in Italy to a base in Germany and then on to Egypt, where he asserts that he was tortured.

Ian C. Kelly, a State Department spokesperson, said the United States was "disappointed" by the verdicts in Milan. He said that because the verdicts were likely to be appealed, he would not comment on the specifics of the case. AFP

JUDGE Oscar Magi reading the verdict at the Milan court. AP

Israel says it seized Iran arms shipment for Hezbollah

ASHDOD, ISRAEL—ISRAEL SAID ON Wednesday that commandos had intercepted a ship carrying "hundreds of tons" of arms from Iran to Hezbollah in a raid dozens of kilometers off the coast but both Iran and Syria denied the cargo was headed to the Lebanese militia.

"We found dozens of containers, with hundreds of tons of arms headed to Hezbollah from Iran," Israeli deputy naval commander Yossi Ben Yehuda told reporters.

The shipment was among the largest ever seized by Israel, dwarfing the 50 tons of weapons found aboard the Karine A seized in 2002 on the way to Gaza, which dealt a major blow to relations between the Palestinians and Washington.

At the Mediterranean port of Ashdod, soldiers pulled hundreds of olive-green ammunition crates from shipping containers, many of them concealed by sacks of cement.

They name them divided into huge stacks of artillery and mortar shells, massive boxes of grenades and ammunition for AK-47 rifles. Many of the weapons crates had inscriptions in Spanish, Chinese and English.

The military had earlier announced that it had seized the 337-meter (kilogram-)-long vessel Francop before dawn around 100 nautical miles from the Israeli coast.

But Yehuda said the capture of the ship was announced in the remnants of his cargo and had agreed to allow Israeli forces to board and inspect the ship. AFP

AN AFGHAN supervisor monitors workers as an open-air factory in the suburbs of Kabul on Nov. 5. REUTERS

UN evacuates foreign staff from Afghanistan after attack

KABUL—THE UNITED NATIONS SAID ON Thursday it would temporarily evacuate hundreds of its international staff from Afghanistan due to deteriorating security, a sharp blow for Western efforts to stabilize the country.

Spokesperson Aleem Siddique said the United Nations would relocate about 600 of its roughly 1,100 international staff, with some being moved to safer sites within Afghanistan and the rest withdrawn from the country temporarily.

The move, a week after five UN foreign staff were killed by militants in Kabul, is a blow for US President Barack Obama's counterinsurgency strategy, which foresees an influx of civilian nationbuilders alongside extra troops.

Obama is due to decide soon on how much he'll approve a request from his commander in Afghanistan for tens of thousands of additional troops. The US force in Afghanistan has already doubled in the nine months since Obama took office.

The United Nations said its evacuation would not change its operations in the country.

"We remain committed to ensuring that all of our programs and activities continue. But obviously following the events of last week, we really do need to have a look at how we can ensure that our staff can continue their programs and activities, but at the same time we can protect their safety," Siddique said. Reuters

Few takers of Obama's engagement offer to foes

WASHINGTON—BARACK OBAma vowed to talk US foes back from the brink, but few have taken him up on the bid, and even US friends have yet to bend to the will of the president's pre-engagement foreign policy.

"We have sought, in word and deed, a new era of engagement with the world," Obama told the United Nations in September.

And there is evidence, in foreign opinion polls, outpourings of goodwill when Obama won election and in a just-minted Nobel Peace Prize that the president has transformed the global diplomatic atmosphere.

But one year after his historic election victory, Obama stands a much-needed foreign policy win, as critics like the Iran nuclear showdown and Afghanistan's seemingly endless war deepen.

Following the trauma of the George W. Bush years, Obama raised Washington's confrontational diplomacy southeast to friends and promised one-on-one contacts with Iran, Syria, North Korea, Cuba, Sudan and Myanmar.

The "reset" new relations with Russia and sought new help from China in enveloping Pyongyang and Tehran.

But critics warn Obama's approach prizes talking over leverage and waits in vain contact timely US gestures.

"I think there is a challenge for this administration, is to engagement for the sake of engagement?" asked Jean Zaroni of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

In the absence of dramatic change, Republicans in Congress have slammed Obama's global "apology tour" and branded his diplomacy a flop.

Obama supporters argue that his foreign policy must be given time and that one man cannot change the world—though his opponents have appeared to suggest otherwise.

As world powers await Iran's response to an offer designed to end the nuclear crisis, Zarate, who was a senior anti-terror official in Bush, suggested US success might be at stake.

"The challenge of the open hand approach is you may be allowing your adversary to dictate the terms of the dialogue," he said.

Some analysts said Obama must show limits of US patience.

Bruce Buchanan, a professor of government at the University of Texas, said it might be time to reject some "steel" into US diplomacy. AFP

Cambodia names Thaksin as gov't adviser

PHNOM PENH, CAMBOdia—Thailand's ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra thanked Cambodia on Thursday for appointing him as an economic adviser.

The latest move by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen to appoint Thaksin—still a deeply divisive figure in Thailand—is likely to further damage relations with Bangkok. It follows a border dispute that led to small but deadly military skirmishes seven months ago and a row over a temple ruin.

Responding to a congratulatory message from a supporter posted on his Twitter page, Thaksin thanked Hun Sen for the appointment.

"I thank Mr. Hun Sen for giving me such an honor," Thaksin tweeted. In Thai from Dubai, where he has spent much of his time since being ousted in a 2006 coup. "But I would have more enjoyment if I could work to reinforce Thai people's poverty."

In Thailand, Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban played down the move and said it would not impact bilateral relations between the two Southeast Asian neighbors.

"It's a domestic affair for Cambodia to appoint anyone. We cannot interfere," Suthep said. "If we like or dislike the person they appoint, we can't express about it."

Thaksin has been living mostly in self-imposed exile since he was overthrown after six years as prime minister. He was accused of corruption and abuse of power and ousting the sometimes constitutional monarch, King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Thaksin was convicted in absentia last year of violating a conflict of interest law and sentenced to two years in prison. Thai officials claim he is trying to undermine the government to regain power.

Hun Sen rolled a warning of Thaksin's visit in Thailand last month by declaring that Thaksin was welcome to take refuge in Cambodia. He said Thaksin was a friend and had been unfairly prosecuted by political enemies.

Thailand responded by saying it would seek to extradite Thaksin if he went to Cambodia. Cambodia in turn said it would reject any such request. AP

Japan's NEC offers eyewear translator

TOKYO—MEET STEPHANIE, Japanese video or eyewear glass, but a new gadget from Japan may soon interpret fingertip skills and cut down language barriers around businesses and Thursday.

High-tech company NEC has come up with a device that it says will allow users to communicate with people of different languages.

Shaped like a pair of eyeglasses, but without the lenses, the computer-assisted Tele Scouter would use an imaging device to project almost real-time translations directly into the user's retina.

The user—provided instantly through voice recognition and translation programs—would effectively provide movie-like 'subtitles' during a conversation between two people wearing the glasses.

"You can keep the conversation flowing," NEC (market development official Takeshi Isobe told AFP at a Tokyo

AN NEC employee displays the automatic translation system "Tele Scouter" AP

exposition where the device was on display.

"This could also be used for talks involving confidential information," negating the need for a human translator, said Omizo.

Each user's spoken words would be picked up by a microphone, translated, and instantly available for the counterpart in both visual text and in audio delivered through headphones.

Omizo can still see Dali conversation partner's face because what is projected onto only part of the retina—the few tens such technology is used in a commercial product, according to NEC. AFP

New Merck begins operations worldwide

WHITEHOUSE STATION, N.J.— Merck & Co. Inc. on Wednesday outlined its global strategy following the completion of its merger with Schering-Plough Corporation.

The new Merck, operating as MSD outside the United States and Canada, is a global health care leader aimed at providing innovative, discovery products and services that seek to improve lives, while satisfying customer needs and creating long-term shareholder value.

"The Philippines is an integral part of the company's expanded global presence. MSD is fully committed to bringing innovative medicines and vaccines to Filipinos as well as undertaking educational efforts that benefit patients and doctors and social programs that build the capacity of health professionals and NGOs to improve healthcare in the country.

Although MSD and Schering-Plough will remain separate legal entities in the Philippines, operations of the two companies will eventually be integrated under the MSD name.

Chris Tan, managing director of MSD Philippines, commented: "This is an exciting time for our company as we advance our position as a strong, global health care leader that will make a substantial difference to patients around the world.

"Thanks to the talent and dedication of our scientists and employees, the company will offer an outstanding clinical development pipeline that will greatly increase our ability to deliver important new medicines to patients.

"We look forward to continuing to meet and exceed the needs of our customers and providing them with the high-quality products and service they have come to expect."

Prior to the merger, Merck is a global health care leader with a diversified portfolio of prescription medicines, vaccines and animal and consumer health products.

The portfolio is complemented by a robust pipeline with more than 35 promising late-stage candidates spanning critical therapeutic categories. Merck now has approximately 74,000 employees and operations in more than 140 countries around the world, including emerging markets.

The company expects to generate more than $8 percent of its revenue outside the United States.

Chrysler chief says automaker's finances are improving

AUBURN HILLS, MICH.—Chrysler said Wednesday that it expects to begin operating profitably by 2011 and repay to loans from the federal government within five years.

The carmaker had $5.7 billion in cash on hand at the end of September, up from the $4 billion it had in June after emerging from bankruptcy, its chief executive, Sergio Marchionne, said.

Marchionne, who also heads Chrysler's Italian partner, Fiat, and Chrysler had a break-even operating performance in September and that the company has become very "parsimonious—cheap" since his arrival this summer.

Chrysler's chief financial officer, Richard Palmer, told reporters that is cash reserve of $9 billion to $5 billion was enough for the company to support its operations.

Chrysler is 10 percent owned by the US government after borrowing $12.5 billion since December to prevent the company's collapse. About $1.4 billion of the money loaned to Chrysler came to before the company's bankruptcy and is not included in the amount Chrysler plans to pay off. The government has already written off that amount as unlikely to be repaid.

Palmer said a sale of Chrysler shares to the public probably would not occur before 2013.

As part of its turnaround, Chrysler said it plans to begin selling at least 10 fuel-efficient cars in the United States by 2013.

Its recovery plan assumes the company will sell 2.6 million vehicles worldwide in 2014, more than double the 1.3 million it will probably sell this year. It calls for sales in the United States to more than double, to 2 million from about 950,000, in five years.

Palmer asserted that such lofty goals are "absolutely achievable."

Vehicles built on Fiat platforms will account for an estimated 16 percent of Chrysler's sales volume in 2014, the company said.

The news came during a daylong series of presentations from Chrysler as it unveils a five-year plan to reorganize and return to profitability after its bankruptcy earlier this year.

One of Chrysler's biggest problems is the relatively poor quality of many of its vehicles. Its three brands—Dodge, Jeep and Chrysler—were among the four that got the lowest ratings from by the magazine Consumer Reports in its annual reliability study released last week.

Doug Betts, Chrysler's senior vice president for quality, said the company realizes that its cars must be more reliable in order for it to succeed. He said it had added 2000 new quality engineers and has begun to take more steps in the factories.

"We get it. We're not in denial," Betts said. "We've got an issue to deal with, both in terms of what people think about us and the reasons behind what they think." AFP

The WORLD

Cito Lorenzo B. Gozo

Iran protesters brave police beatings

BEIRUT, LEBANON—IRAN'S BELEAGUERED OPPOSITION movement struggled to reassert itself on Wednesday, as tens of thousands of protesters braved police beatings and clouds of tear gas on the sidelines of a major, government-sponsored anti-American rally.

The protests—in Tehran and several other cities—were the opposition's largest street showing in almost two months and came on the 30th anniversary of the takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Iran, an event that was a crucible for both Iran and the United States. Although a huge force of police officers beat back and wounded many of them, the protesters took heart in their ability to openly challenge the government despite a season of stark warnings from all levels of Iran's conservative establishment.

Even some governments analysts seemed to grudgingly concede that the opposition had—for the first time—disrupted the annual anti-American rally. The official IRNA news agency reported in midafternoon that "thieves," many wearing the opposition's signature green color, had gathered in front of the officers assigned to guard the rally, and had to be driven away by tear gas.

At the same time, a new theme emerged, with many protesters declaring their impatience with President Barack Obama's policy of dialogue with the Iranian government. Many could be heard chanting, "Obama, Obama—either you're with them or you're with us," witnesses said.

Others released his own statement on Wednesday to mark the anniversary of the embassy takeover, repeating his appeals to move beyond the two countries' mutual distrust. The statement expressed sympathy for Iran's opposition movement and suggested that time was running out on a UN-backed plan aimed at averting a showdown over Iran's nuclear ambitions.

"The world continues to hear attitudes in their peaceful calls for justice and their courageous pursuit of universal rights," the statement said of the Iranian people.

There were reports of several dozen arrests on Wednesday's protests, including some outside Tehran, and many injuries.

One young man who had been leading antigovernment chants in Vahdat Square summed up the day's events like this: "One day we come out and it's our day, another day they suppress us. Today we did not get to have our say, but it was good enough that we brought them out onto the streets." AFP

Libo Raul O. Marcelo • Associate Libo Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

October inflation hits 5-month high of 1.6%

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■ **Bangko Sentral keeps** rates unchanged /B6

By Bernard W. Dominguez

CONSUMER PRICES ROSE 1.6 PERCENT YEAR-ON-year in October, the fastest in five months as the devastation caused by recent storms pushed the cost of rice, fruits, vegetables and meat higher in most regions in the country.

Still, the increase from the National Statistics Office showed that last month's inflation rate was just over a tenth of the 11.2 percent recorded in the same period in 2008.

This put the average inflation in the 10 months to October at 3.2 percent, which acting Economic Planning Secretary Augusto B. Santos said was "still within the [Government's] Development Budget Coordination Committee's forecast of 3.5 percent to 4.5 percent."

Of the six categories making up the consumer price index, only the faster-by-weighted food, beverage and other-

OCTOBER /B4

INQUIRER CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P47.636 = $1

¥5.37 = $1

As of 5 p.m. Thu, 6, 2009

BPInoy Real Thrills makes long-distance "pasalubong" possible for Overseas Pinoys

Overseas Filipinos can now send "pasalubong" to their loved ones every time they remit through BPInoy at BPI Express Remittance Center (BERC) or any of its remittance tie-ups. This is made possible through the BPInoy Real Thrills Program, an automated rewards program that gives equivalent credits for remittance transactions.

"BPInoy understands the Expat Pinoys' need to connect with their loved ones in the Philippines. BPInoy Real Thrills enables Expat Pinoys to bring joy to their families even when they are far away by sending them 'pasalubong' for free," says Teresita B. Tan, BPI Senior Vice President and Group Head of the Overseas Banking and Channels Services Group.

The Real Thrills program is BPI's rewards program for its clients. The program is active all throughout the bank's network of services from credit cards, savings accounts, and even loans. The BPInoy Real Thrills program specifically caters to Overseas Filipinos.

BPI's merchant partner for the BPInoy Real Thrills program is the well-loved Pinoy fast-food chain, Jollibee. Depending on credits accumulated, the BPInoy beneficiary can redeem favorite meals such as a Jollibee spaghetti, 2-pcs. Chickenjoy with rice, and 2-pcs. Burger Steak with rice from any Jollibee branch nationwide.

The BPInoy Real Thrills Program utilizes the power of technology to automatically calculate accumulated credits once the remitter has completed registration eligibility requirements online at www.myrealthrills.com. The handiness of the internet allows Overseas Filipinos to send their surprise "pasalubong" to their families at their own convenience. The system also alerts the beneficiary via SMS that they can now claim their free Jollibee meals.

Valid remittance transactions include credit to any BPI, BPI Family Savings Bank or BPI Direct account (otherwise referred to as CTA), door-to-door delivery, and branch pick-up transactions (or non-CTA). CTA remittances made through BERC offices generate higher credits that bring you closer to free BPInoy Real Thrills.

This promo is valid until March 15, 2010. To learn more about the BPInoy Real Thrills program and register, visit www.myrealthrills.com.

Another BPO firm expands RP presence

LIST GLOBAL, A LEADING provider of end-to-end IT BPO services and solutions, will expand its Philippine workforce by hosting 1,000 vicencio. Over the next few years, LIST expects to increase the number of its workers at the IT-services and BPO center to over 5,000.

This reflects the growing demand for the company's outsourcing services and strengthens the Philippines' presence as LIST's second largest location outside the United States, following India.

"LIST is grateful for the help and support from the government of the Philippines in establishing and expanding our presence here," said Joe Sullivan, chief operating officer for LIST Global. "The improved bilateral compatibility with the US and time-zone efficiency make the Philippines an important part of our growing Asian presence and long term global strategy."

LIST invested in the Philippines to take advantage of the country's highly-skilled IT workforce.

After 2 yrs, Kodak back in RP

By Abigail L. Ho

KODAK PHILIPPINES LTD. IS REOPENING its Philippine office, after two years of maintaining its presence here solely through distributors.

In a statement yesterday, Kodak Philippines country business manager for retail printing Cesley Sucio said the company felt this was the right time to reinforce its presence in the country and keep pace with the growth of the local imaging sector.

The company now sees greater opportunity in the Philippine market in areas both the digital and traditional aspects of its business, she added.

"We are in exciting times when digital technology has inspired Kodak worldwide to grow by leaps and bounds with its products and offers," she said.

"Kodak has indeed done a good balancing act, aggressively promoting our digital imaging portfolio, while preserving our traditional film and analog camera business," she added.

Kodak in May 2007 decided to close its Philippine office and just adopt the distribution model for the bulk of its businesses, which included the consumer digital and film and photofinishing groups.

The company then just got a local company, Technomedia Corp., to represent Kodak picture kiosk franchise Kodak Co. in the Philippines.

Technomedia, apart from its sub-distributorship agreements with different centers in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, also owned the Kodak Express one-stop digital shop franchise, which has a nationwide network of more than 350 stores.

With the return of Kodak's Philippine office, it would now coordinate its marketing and promotional activities with its authorized nationwide distributors led by Technomedia.

Two other distributors, Wachter Inc. and Jose Pons Cebu Imaging Corp., would also be involved in pushing the Kodak brand locally.

"Kodak has brought back its Philippine office to ensure that the Filipinos are always kept abreast of the latest exciting offerings from Kodak," Kodak Philippines country business manager for digital capture and devices Jessie Catherine said.

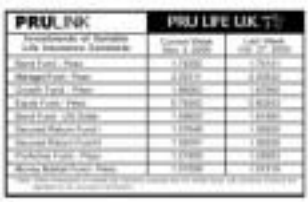
Pazon also said that the advent of digital photography had ruined the photo printing business to slow in previous years.

This time, however, Kodak felt that the industry was again poised for growth.

Consumers, while still hooked on digital photography, had now found ways to enhance and print their digital photos, instead of just storing them in their computers or on CDs.

Kodak offers a wide range of printing services, including the photo kiosk and the photo mania.

Company feels time is right to test new opportunities



Finding the right home loan partner in China Bank

EVERYONE DREAMS OF LIVING alone and in their own bungalow, where their bank is a way forward which this dream can be realized. In making such a big investment, the decision of which bank to partner with is crucial. The right partner can provide the resources, rates and terms that make it easy and affordable to buy or build a home, but more importantly, the right partner can save an hour that just a couple or a minute is an eye. Rather, it saves will engender in the hands of customers particularly the time to truly understand their plans and aspirations, like China Bank.

There are so many items here in the market these days with an increasing variety of rates, fees and features that it really pays to shop around. It's worth noting that China Bank's good over since it began offering permanent loans in it's early, building buying, or renovating a home affordable for the average Filipino. That's why in the past, its interest rates on their consumer loans are as low as 7.99% p.a. fixed for 1 year, 8.75% p.a. fixed for 4 to 5 years, 10.99% p.a. fixed for 10 years and 11.99% p.a. fixed for 15 years. Promotional rate apply then thereafter rates for up to 20 years for a home and for up to 15 years for vacant lots and up to 10 years for condominium units. To make loan applications more convenient, China Bank offers auto-debit arrangement as well as less necessary processes through China Bank's subsidiary, China Bank Insurance Brokers, Inc.

Those who have their salaries credited to their China Bank savings account can avail of their home loan amortizations as well as taxes. Interest China Bank brings value to every home loan partnership by being responsive as well as candid. So much so China Bank assures its loan applications are processed in shortest time possible, personnel, is proficient to be honest and candid with customers and gives busy, straightforward information about their loan applications as quickly as possible.

"We understand upon communicating with our customers as problems can be resolved out together," said Lilibeth R. Cortez, China Bank vice president and branch 83 concerns banking center in Commonwealth. "China Bank aims to understand the needs and financial positions of customers and offers advice to help them make the right decisions concerning their home loans."

"We are partners with a number of reputable home developers and can help customers even if some they can afford and enjoy. Those who already have home loans with other banks can also bring their loans to China Bank as long as they are not current rates," she said.

Customers who avail of home loans are usually in it for the long haul. That's why, in addition to the badges to work with, it is wise to choose the right partner that does not only offer competitive services, but one that truly understands that a good banking relationship is a good partnership.

To apply for a China Bank loan or to get more information on the loan rates, please call 891-5141, email loans@chinabank.ph, or visit www.chinabank.ph or any China Bank branch nationwide.

Agriculture technology and climate change

By Ernesto Ordoñez

LAST NOV 4, IN A FROST FREE area, Dr. Jose Romulo, "BF" is not for climate change," Romel Domingo reported. "Philippine agencies have a low capacity to adapt to climate change, according to a self-assessment workshop conducted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and National Economic and Development Authority (Neda)."

One finding is that while nine national service agencies generally "have the capacity to adapt to climate change, this is not for planned nor implemented." The Department of Agriculture (DA) is one of these agencies.

Time to move

Climate change is upon us. This was demonstrated recently and dramatically by "Ondoy" and "Pepeng." The damage to agriculture has been estimated at over P16 billion.

According to the "Training Manual on Climate and Climate Change," there can be best key response measure in climate change mitigation, adaptation, technology, and financing. Dr. has already started quickly as mitigation, adaptation and S. warming. This is where the subsidies DA is now giving to farmers for their production inputs.

To address the expected food shortages, DA has announced increased importation of rice, poultry and maize. However, in a way to protect consumers, DA should not forget the farmers, who are also our nation's largest constituents.

Over importation at the wrong time, a practice which the Alyansa Agrikultura opposed in its consumer agri-fish-ery agenda approved as early as 2003, will not only destroy agricultural livelihood. It will also prevent farmers from producing more food and actually decrease food production.

The farmer will say, "Why should I plant again? If prices drop because of oversupply from excessive importation, I will only lose money. I might as well stop producing!"

Technology emphasis

But what needs more attention now is significant emphasis on new technologies, which is observed to grow because of the attention given to mitigation, adaptation, and financing. One example is System of Rice Intensification (SRI).

With climate becoming more unpredictable, rice farmers must be able to cope with extreme weather events and unusually wet or dry spells. Climate change increases the risks and actual costs of farming, and farmers must learn to adapt.

An adaptation method for lower wind susceptibility in India, China, Indonesia, Pakistan, Vietnam and other rice-producing countries. SRI was developed in the 1980s by Anné agriculturist Fr. Henri de Laulanie. With simple changes in rice growing practices, SRI reduces water and seed costs, avoids chemical fertilizers (a major carbon source); reduces methane (a greenhouse gas) emissions; makes rice plants sturdier and more resistant to typhoon damage; and more significantly, increases yields.

In the Philippines, the main SRI advocate is Robert Tenorio, interestingly an Information Technology (IT) expert, a former executive of Intel Corporation and an author who has published two books on agricultural matters.

But having studied and seen SRI's success in many farms since 2000, and sadly observing its very limited technology transfer, specially during the time of climate change, Tenorio now spends a significant amount of his time propagating SRI.

Other advocates who have

Euromoney's "Best Insurer in the Philippines" continues to aim for excellence

After being cited as Euromoney's 2009 Best Insurer in the Philippines, it was "business as usual" for Pioneer Insurance & Surety Corporation, one of the country's top non-life insurance companies. The "usual" though, for Pioneer Insurance is definitely out of the ordinary, as the standard for the team is to constantly aim for higher levels of excellence. Having also been cited by the magazine as Best Insurer for Innovation and Best for Claims Resolution, the team has been challenged to not only maintain but surpass the expectations of its varied client base.

In the survey, conducted by the leading journal for international financial markets, 400 risk managers, treasurers and chief financial officers were asked to rank the best insurers around the world. Pioneer Insurance topped the survey as Best Insurer for the Philippines, joining 59 other Best Insurer awardees from other countries. "In an increasingly challenging financial environment, the winners of the 2009 Euromoney Insurance Awards are those that exhibited the ability to innovate, respond to the increasingly complex demands of their clients, and make the best use of the inherent strengths of their organization. Through the insurance survey, the market has recognized the achievements of these institutions in the face of difficult market conditions, which is why the awards are so richly deserved", said Neil Osborn, publisher of Euromoney.

"Our clients have always expressed their appreciation for our ability to resolve claims and for the way we respond to their needs," states Pioneer Insurance President and CEO David Coyiuliat. "The Best Insurer citation is an assurance that we are serving our clients well." He likewise sees the recognition as a reminder, "to be constantly aware of how we can serve our clients even better in a challenging environment."

Pioneer Insurance has been serving the Filipino for over half a century. This experience, coupled with the drive to be consistently among the top five non-life insurers in the country, makes Pioneer a respected name in the industry. With Euromoney naming it "Best Insurer in the Philippines 2009", the Pioneer team proudly forges ahead and looks forward to being the industry benchmark for excellence, year after year.

59
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Pioneer Insurance
More than 400 risk managers, treasurers and chief financial officers from top companies in 59 countries ranked the world's best insurers and brokers for the 2009 Euromoney Insurance survey in the Philippines. Pioneer Insurance & Surety Corporation was selected as Best Insurer for 2009, and as Best in Innovation and Claims Resolution.

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One-time gain lifts net profit of SMC to ₱57B

Doris C. Dumlao

SAN MIGUEL CORP. YESTERDAY reported a 171-percent surge in its net profit for the first nine months, mainly due to one-time gains from the earlier sale of a substantial stake in Bogo-bo Sen Miguel Brewery.

Net profit from January to September reached ₱57 billion compared with ₱20.9 billion a year ago. But on one-off items, San Miguel said it rose 16 percent year-on-year to ₱7.6 billion.

The company said in a statement that its financial results were "driven by the sustained growth of its lines and liquor units, along with higher productivity and continuing cost discipline across all businesses."

Consolidated revenues grew 4 percent to ₱128.5 billion from a year ago while operating income also ended the period 12 percent higher at ₱11.1 billion.

Volume improvements continued with cost management and stable raw material prices boosted San Miguel Brewery's performance of to a difficult first three months.

SMB posted a net income of ₱5.2 billion in the first nine months of the year, up 2 percent from the same period of 2008. Revenues and operating income were both up 6 percent in the January to September period to ₱37 billion and ₱11.3 billion, respectively.

With the San Miguel-Ochoterbeck kickoff in September, SMB expects to further improve volumes and consumption for the rest of 2009.

Liquor unit Ginebra San Miguel also reported double-digit results with revenues of ₱14.1 billion, up 27 percent from the same period last year. Operating income rose 46 percent to ₱672 million.

Excessive credit card fees

Corporate Secretaries Philippines

Rene C. Pefianco

AS THE HOLIDAY SEASON APproaches, the temptation to indulge one's self or make other people happy through expensive gifts is dark. It can be tested.

The financially prudent person will not spend money he has not yet earned. But with the easy availability of credit cards, that cautionary attitude is not easy to keep.

The resistance is further eroded by slick, "interest-free installment payment" advertisements by credit card companies.

How nice to be able to buy or enjoy something you want. But not necessarily need without having to check your wallet or run to the nearest ATM for cash.

Paid-plastic money, the politicians is justice. Where or how to get the money to pay for that amount of bliss one may until receipt of the bill from the credit card company.

If you have enough funds in your bills then. The dangers can be quickly settled. With the prompt payment, your credit standing remains unblemished.

It becomes problematic though if you overspent or miscalculated your projected cash flow. Failure to pay the bill on time would make you liable for interest and penalty charges on the unpaid amount.

The amount of additional charges that credit card companies can impose on ensuing cardholders was a issue again I passed upon by the Supreme Court. In the recent case of "Banco Mendoza v. Bank of the Philippine Islands," G.R. No. 175498, Sept. 17, 2009.

Charges

The case is an offshoot of the failure of Mendozas, as cardholder of BPI Mastercard, to pay for purchases she made through her credit card in the amount of ₱1,41,518.94.

The credit card agreement states that balances that remain outstanding after the stipulated payment date shall have interest at the rate of 3 percent per month and an additional penalty fee equivalent to 3 percent per month.

BPI sued Mendozas at the Metropolitan trial court for the unpaid amount, plus 3.25-percent finance charges and late payment charges of 6 percent, or a total of 9.25 percent a month, which is equivalent to 111 percent a year.

The demand was on top of a separate claim for attorney's fees and court costs.

The cardholder failed to file its answer to the complaint so the court allowed BPI to present its evidence on the unpaid obligations.

The court ruled in BPI's favor and ordered Mendozas to pay the unpaid amount plus interest and penalty charges of 2 percent a month. The ruling was, upon her appeal, affirmed by the regional trial court.

The two lower courts declared the 9.25-percent interest and penalty charges as excessive and reduced them to 2 percent a month, or 24 percent a year.

Excessive

Refused by those setbacks, Mendozas elevated the case to the Court of Appeals which, eventually, increased the charges to 3 percent a month.

The appellate court invoked the provision of the credit card agreement earlier mentioned as justification for its action.

Reinstated, Mendozas petitioned the Supreme Court to overturn that decision as well as the imposition of the 3 percent per month interest rate. It was a sequence in the same timeframe as the 36 percent per annum or the rate the legal rate of interest."

But the court maintained that the charges are "reasonable in the sum are based on the Truth in Lending Act (Governing the Issuance and Use of the ATM Credit Card)."

The tribunal ruled in favor of Mendozas.

Admittedly, the credit card agreement between the parties provides for the imposition of 3 percent interest on unpaid charges.

But, the tribunal pointed out, in order for courts to invalidate "stipulated interest rates of 3 percent per month and higher are excessive, iniquitous, unconscionable and exorbitant. Such stipulations are void for being contrary to morals, if not against the law."

Recomputation

The tribunal reminded that CB [Central Bank] Circular No. 905.82, which took effect on Jan. 1, 1993, effectively removed the ceiling on interest rates for both secured and unsecured loans, regardless of maturity.

It explained, however, that "nothing in the said circular could possibly be read as granting carte blanche authority to lenders to raise interest rates to levels which would either enslave their borrowers or lead to a hemorrhaging of their assets."

Following this principle, the tribunal said the subject credit card agreement's provision on interest and penalty charges are void. It is as if they did not exist at all.

Accordingly, in line with the authority granted by Article 1229 of the New Civil Code, our courts can reduce these charges to reason and equity dictated.

The tribunal stressed, however, that in the exercise of that power, "courts are not to rewrite the contracts of each case since what may be iniquitous and unconscionable in one may be totally just and equitable in another."

Summing up, the interest rate and penalty charges provided for in the appellate court at 1.5 percent per month each was ordered by the tribunal to 1 percent or a total of 2 percent a month, or 24 percent a year.

In addition, Mendozas was ordered to pay BPI ₱1,000 as attorney's fees and to reimburse the court fees it paid. Mendozas may be liable for credit card charges on time or, better still, for other year terms.

For feedback, please send to readers@inquirer.com.ph

Petroenergy 9-month profit down 27%

By Amy R. Barro

PETROENERGY RESOURCES CORP. posted a 27-percent drop in net income in the first nine months of the year to ₱1.58 million, due largely to lower crude oil prices this year.

In a regulatory filing, Petroenergy also reported that its revenues nine months fell by 32.6 percent to ₱2.06 million from ₱3.07 million a year ago.

"The decrease in oil revenues was brought by the substantial decrease in crude price to an average price of $66.93 a barrel for the third quarter of 2009 from $122.71 for the third quarter of 2008," Petroenergy said.

Petroenergy's revenues are derived mainly from its oil exploration and production from the oil fields in West Africa, to the Philippines, the company has interests in Service Contract 146, Linapacan, SC 47 in Mindoro and SC 41 in the Reed Bank area.

As of end-September, crude oil inventory dipped slightly by 2.17 percent to 6,867,000 due to lower crude oil price of $66.96 a barrel, compared to the $95.64-a-barrel price closing for the same period in 2008.

Despite the uncertainties reaching from the recent financial crunch, Petroenergy said it would continue to invest prudently in the country's renewable energy sector.

"Renewable energy is the hottest and highest sector. Making investment in this sector should be set the relative abundance of domestic renewable energy sources and the environmental incentives provided by the eco-friendly enacted Renewable Energy Law," the company added.

Petroenergy earlier said it planned to invest ₱1.66 million in two 30-megawatt wind farms—one in Aklan and the other in Pangasinan.

October ...

From page B1

...group showed a faster rate of increase at 11.7 percent from 2.2 percent in September.

Slower price increases were seen in clothing and miscellaneous items, both rising to 2 percent from 2.1 percent.

The increase in prices of housing and repairs remained to 2.1 percent as in September.

Meanwhile, prices of fuel, light and water fell faster at 3.6 percent last month from 3.4 percent in September, while those of services slid slower at 2.2 percent from 2.3 percent.

The NSO said that for food alone, the yearly inflation rate inched up to 3.4 percent in October from 2.1 percent in September.

Rice prices inched up by 5.8 percent, swinging from a decline of 1.9 percent in September. Prices of fruits and vegetables were also up 9.6 percent from 11.5 percent. Meat prices rose 0.3 percent last month from 2.7 percent in September.

Easton said in a report to Pesalink Securities that a 11.1-percent increase in rates prices contributed to the rise in inflation last month.

Stocks close higher on Meralco stake sale

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.27 percent higher yesterday, driven by expectations that a large block of shares in top power utility Meralco is about to be put on the market, a dealer said.

The composite index added 34.88 points to 2,944.51, while the all shares index gained 7.459 percent or 19.93 points to 1,644.71.

Turnover was a heavy 2.53 billion shares worth ₱4.16 billion, while 62 issues rose, 49 fell and 62 were unchanged.

The peso traded at ₱47.92 to the dollar in the morning.

"The market is up mainly on corporate mergers and acquisitions, stocks and foreign investments coming in for the last quarter of the year, especially in the mining sector," Nicko Alano of SA Market Securities told AFP.

"Despite inflation and weaker dollar numbers, we managed to close higher on the MSCI approval of the Meralco deal," Alano told Dow Jones Newswires.

A move by a set of shopping mall magnate Henry Sy to buy a chunk of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) from one of the country's biggest diversified conglomerates investors in the firm to stand on their positions, boosting their market prices.

AFP

Market assessment

AGAIN, THE TREND OF THE market has been very much adverse as before. Stock prices though are ostensibly lapsing into a symmetrical triangle converging toward the extreme tip.

Let me briefly discuss this market pattern could very well culminate into a turning point. Once attended to the point at which it could no longer move on either side, stock prices will reverse or keep close to break out on trends closely following natural market dynamics.

Even under the present market circumstances, stock prices should be technically heading upward, subject simply means that there are now many investors who, though inclined to hold higher prices, they started to hold higher. This is supposedly by the performance of other similarly situated stocks.

At present, therefore, the direction of the market is more likely to be heading north than south. The trading activity though may just be confined within the limits of the immediate support trendline at 2,940 and resistance level at 2,981. A break through the 2,981 level should be accompanied by trade with fundamental significance.

Week 21

A detailed statistical table on the breakdown of the investment portfolio of all the market riders in the trend group for week 21 is additionally supplied to give you a better appreciation behind their excellent or poor performances.

For example, what trends can in market leader Trust Me is the heavy reliance in the property sector at 60.74 percent followed by a 38.24 percent investment in the service sector. Close steel and second player. The Oracle, on the other hand, put in more investments in the rest of the industrial sector.

GB Trader observers see here for with the financial sector. In addition, she is holding on to a huge cash equivalent to 31.17 percent of original capital. This only attributed to a fat third place. She is certainly among a few of top performers to earn more by

MARKET RIDER

Bert Tonteria

pulling all of her money in week.

At fourth place, the long player placed his chances on the technical sector to add that to the service sector like Go Grade. But unlike the latter, he uses to investment in the property sector.

Fifth player Trader 01 is also invested in the industrial sector with the mining sector as a complementary investment. So far, this investment connection has yet to pay off to validate his former play.

The Cyclebreaker is also invested in the more prospective property sector but is more heavily leaning on the performance of the holding firm sector. The stakes her is still taboo.

Positions remained at the bottom of the contest for the longest time. She is holding on to most cash like Gb Trader. Her lack of trading activity is not helping as well.

Bottom line: spin

Assuming that the current market pattern continues, it is very likely that a market breakout toward the 2,975 will happen very soon. If it has not happened yet as this article comes to press.

Any price sensitive or some market investor should be taken as an opportunity to buy. That, I would maintain my previous trading call to "Buy on Weakness."

The mining sector together with the service sector stocks such as Megaworld, Emperor and Globe should be good targets for accumulation.

If you happen to miss this course.

The stock rights offering of Security Bank (SECB) will be listed on the PSE on Nov. 16. The rights issue had a ratio of 3.7:1 with the offer price of P219 a share. This will boost the capital of the bank to P2.5 billion and increase the bank's core capital adequacy ratio from 14.3 percent to 16.8 percent.

Also, Energy Development Corp. declared a stock dividend equivalent to 25 percent for stockholders as of the record date Oct. 27, with date payable Nov. 23.

You may reach the Market Rider at marketrider@mail.com.ph or through at abenteria@yahoo.com.

Weak global trade hits ICTSI

By Rica T. Olchondra

INTERNATIONAL CONTAINER Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) saw its net income fall in the first nine months of the year as cargo volumes declined due to weak global trade.

In a statement, ICTSI said that net income declined by 29 percent to $97.2 million from $92.4 million in the nine months ending Sept. 30, 2009.

The company attributed the declines to lower container volume brought about by the decline in international trade, higher interest expense due to higher debt level, and the depreciation of currencies in the countries where ICTSI's ports are located (Philippine peso, Brazilian real, Malaysian ringgit, Rand) relative to the US dollar in the third quarter of the previous year.

Revenue from port operations dropped 15 percent to $299.3 million from $352.4 million.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) also decreased 17 percent, from $154.9 million to $128.1 million.

For the third quarter alone, ICTSI reported a 6-percent drop in net income and a 12-percent decline in revenue.

Net income was $34 million from the $36.7 million last year, according to the company's consolidated unaudited financial results for the quarter ending Sept. 30, 2009.

Revenue from port operations for the third quarter of 2009 was at $110.5 million from the $128.1 million reported in the same period last year.

Ebitda stood at $49.2 million, down 12 percent from the $55.8 million presented in the third quarter of 2008.

ICTSI chair and president Enrique K. Razon Jr said in a statement that "global economic conditions continue to be more challenging than in recent years."

"Third quarter throughput volumes were stronger than the first two quarters, and the benefits of our cost containment efforts also contributed to ICTSI's improving financial results," he said.

For the nine months ended Sept. 30, ICTSI handled 2,533,891 TEUs (twenty foot equivalent units) compared to 2,776,972 TEUs in 2008, representing a decline of 9 percent.

Volumes in the third quarter was 9 percent lower at 942,805 TEUs compared to the 1,021,489 TEUs in the same period in 2008.

9-month income down 29%

Strong sales boost GMA-7 bottomline

By Doris C. Dumlao

BROADCASTING GIANT GMA Network Inc. yesterday reported of a 10-percent growth in nine-month net profits over a year ago on higher revenues from ad-time sales and international operations offset an increase in expenditures.

The company booked a net profit of P1.15 billion from January to September this year compared with P1.06 billion net profit in the same period last year.

For the third quarter alone, net income amounted to P380 million, 4 percent lower compared to P425 million a year ago, as expenses spiked up due to employee bonuses. This came as the company signed in July a collective bargaining agreement with its employees, which provided for a hefty signing bonus, costing GMA P158 million in extraordinary bonus expenses.

Gross revenues for the first nine months rose by 7 percent to P10.82 billion. Bulwar revenues from television and radio contributed 99.34 billion while subscription fees from international channel GMA Pinoy TV and overseas processing activities of subsidiaries contributed 9782 million.

The company has also benefited from an increase in subscription or political spending ahead of the 2010 presidential elections. About P400 million in ad-time sales was made from these political advertisements, P389 million of which came from politicians' parties.

Starting this November and the 90-day campaign period for national candidates before the May 2010 elections, however, these advocacy advertisements may dry up. After the Dec. 1 deadline to file candidacy, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) is prohibited from campaigning and the broadcasting networks and movie houses will be prohibited from showing these ads, GMA Network president Felipe Gozon said.

"So after you file that, you become a candidate and because you are already a candidate you cannot campaign before the 90-day period. Otherwise you will be guilty of premature campaigning," Gozon said.

"But all is not lost. Through experience, what we've found out is that big volume advertisements are not the ones that immediately see fruition because when these candidates put these ad spots because they don't want to get lost in the shuffle of advertisements. In we've found... that other advertisers that ran back until no-one spending months before the election. So, historically our late advertising months become after Dec. 31 everyone is on Christmas holiday mode," Gozon said.

Total operating expenses grew by 9 percent to P8.54 billion. Production costs alone increased by 2 percent year-on-year to P2.92 billion.

General and administrative expenses increased by 18 percent to P2.63 billion primarily due to the growth in personnel costs in the third quarter with the GMA implementation.

Meanwhile, the company's cash flow as generated from its operations before interests, taxes, depreciation and amortization amounted to P3.71 billion for the nine-month period, up by 4 percent over a year ago.

Gozon said the company was on track to hit P3.55 billion in net profit goal for the full year. "We remain ahead of competition in terms of ratio. Barring any major event that will affect the company's performance for the remaining months, I think 2009 will be the best year for the company for the network," he said.

Subscription revenues for GMA International jumped by 64 percent over a year ago on steady growth in the subscriber base of two international channels GMA Pinoy TV and GMA Life TV which are now available in the US, Canada, Europe, Middle East, North Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Guam, Papua New Guinea, Singapore and Hong Kong, among others.

Loans push up PNB's 9-mo. net income

By Doris C. Dumlao

TYCOON LUCIO TAN'S PHILIPPINE National Bank reported a 12.6-percent growth in nine-month net profit to P11.16 billion over a year ago on double-digit increases in net interest income and a triple-digit rise in treasury gains due to an improved financial investment.

The net profit booked for the January to September period stood 12.6 percent better than its full year net income of P11.12 billion in 2008.

"This year 2009 is proving to be a banner year for PNB. The bank is expected to close the year with its highest bottomline in its 109 years of existence to 12 years, now surpassing the P1 billion mark," the bank's press statement said.

Nine-month net interest income went up by 16 percent to P16 billion from a year ago, owing to the increase in business volume and wider interest margin. Total loans and receivables hit P111.9 billion, up 24 percent year-on-year.

Corporate banking activities focused on acquiring new customers, expanding relationships with existing accounts, and participating in big-ticket syndicated loans either as lead lender or co-arranger. The customer lending business, particularly home and auto loans, improved on the cross-selling efforts with the bank's corporate and consumer customer base.

Given the increase in lending portfolio, the share of loans to total assets went up to 48 percent from 37.3 percent at end-2008 due to weighted-to-higher-yielding assets improved the bank's interest margins.

On the other hand, deposits went up by P30 billion from year to date to close September at P121.2 billion, with the deposit mix improving in favor of low-cost funds.

PNB's bottomline income was further buoyed by the 58-percent increase year-on-year in other operating income which closed to P6.6 billion, fed loading on trading and securities gains was positive at P1.82 billion, up by 215 percent from year-ago levels partly due to favorable mark-to-market valuations of securities trading September.

The bank also registered higher income on its liquidity and likewise out of fair value adjustments on foreclosed assets. The increase in all other operating income components was more than sufficient to offset the reduction in foreign exchange transaction gains, the lower revaluation of foreign currency denominated accounts.

Meanwhile, operating expenses rose by 50 percent largely due to higher provisioning for unpaid assets and credit losses (provisions). But bank made additional provisions of P1.1 billion for impairment loss covering loans and receivables, and bank acquired assets. This brought the nonperforming loan ratio to 6.5 percent.

"PNB opted to take a more prudent stance given the lingering vulnerability of the fiscal economy to adverse market conditions which may cause some deterioration in the credit quality of some accounts," the bank added.

The NPL ratio improved to 6.8 percent from 10.6 percent a year ago.

PNB's total resources closed at P286 billion, 3.4 percent higher versus December 2008. Bank's growth was primarily funded by the 5-percent expansion in deposits and the 9-percent increase in stockholders' equity. Its capital adequacy ratio stood comfortably above the 10 percent, higher than the minimum regulatory requirement of 10 percent.

Electronic derivatives dealing launched

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES' FIRST ELECTRONIC trading platform for over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives trading and brokering services was launched by Reuters and Philippine Dealing Exchange (PDEx).

Two banks licensed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to handle derivatives, or sophisticated hedging instruments whose values vary alongside underlying instruments, entered into a peso interest rate swap transaction via ICAP's system, the companies said.

The transaction is a one-year peso interest rate swap for P50 million, based on ICAP data.

An interest rate swap, a very popular and highly liquid instrument, is a derivative in which one party exchanges a stream of interest payments for another party's stream of such flows. It can be used by hedgers to manage their fixed or floating assets and liabilities and can also be used by investors to benefit from changes in interest rates.

"I-Trade is a very efficient electronic brokering system in the Philippines' infra-dealer marketplace where IDAP already provides OTC voice brokering services to professional wholesale market participants," ICAP said.

"ICAP's electronic FXTrade platform complements the voice option. It offers sterling market participants the choice of either executing spot forex brokered execution processes in an electronic format," the company said.

Only peso interest rate swap (IRS) products are available on I-Trade at present but in the future, ICAP plans to introduce foreign exchange forwards.

Sale of Megaworld bonds gets under way

By Doris C. Dumlao

PROPERTY DEVELOPER MEGAworld Corp. will start today its offering of five-year retail bonds carrying a coupon rate of 6.98 percent per annum.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Megaworld said it had signed an agreement with joint lead underwriters and bookrunners BDO Capital & Investment Corp. and PNBM Ltd. that finalized the terms of conditions of the bonds due on May 18, 2015. The retail principal amount of the Megaworld bonds is P1 billion.

The Securities and Exchange Commission has approved the offering, which is targeted to start today and will run until Nov. 11 or 5 banking days thereafter.

Local credit watchdog Credit Rating and Investor Services Philippines Inc. (CRISP) has assigned an "AAA" rating to the proposed bond issuance. This is CRISP's highest rating, which reflects the issuing company's very strong capacity to repay obligations.

The amount to be generated from the offering will be used for the development of its new 6.36-hectare mixed-use venture in North Bonifacio, Taguig.

Megaworld has also committed to unveil at least P15.8 billion over the next 10 years to develop the North Bonifacio property, located in the northern district of Fort Bonifacio and total ending off the way to Bahayang Araw. The property is now the eleventh township of the Megaworld-Global City Holdings Inc. mixed-use where the finish, Japanese and American international schools and centers located.

The company was recently awarded the right to develop the joint property as a joint venture partner of the government Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA).

The BCDA will be paid an upfront cash amount of P1.06 billion plus P396.62 million in annual revenues for the next 12 years.

BUSINESS

Bangko Sentral keeps rates unchanged

Hyundai is the runaway winner. Ms. Fe Perez-Aguilo (3rd from left), President and CEO of Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI), proudly accepts the Automobile of the Year award for HARI's flagship car, the Grand Starex. Joining HARI's moment of triumph are Mr. Gerry Aquino, Chairman of the Auto Focus Awards Committee (1st from left); Mr. Edgardo Lacson, President of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2nd from left); and Mr. Butch Gamboa, Chairman and CEO of Sunshine TV (4th from left).

Pump-priming still needed to boost growth

By Michelle V. Rosca

FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE time, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has maintained its policy rates at historic lows in the belief that the economy still needed a boost from a low-interest rate environment to fully recover from the adverse impact of the recent global turmoil.

Emerging from the policy-setting meeting of the Monetary Board of the central bank, Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a briefing yesterday that the existing policy rates were still deemed appropriate at the moment.

"Keeping the policy rates steady will help support domestic demand, including the government's efforts of the government, and macroeconomic activity in the near term," Tetangco said.

The decision of the Monetary Board not to touch the overnight borrowing rate kept it at 4 percent. The overnight lending rate was also maintained at a historic low of 6 percent. The BSP normally keeps a spread of 2 percentage points between its overnight borrowing and lending rates.

In response to the drag caused by the global economic downturn on emerging markets like the Philippines, the BSP implemented a series of policy rate cuts totaling 200 basis points (two percentage points) from December 2008 to the first quarter.

The objective of the rate reductions was to influence banks to also cut their lending rates, thereby encourage borrowings by households and corporations to boost consumption and investments, monetary officials said.

Since the policy rate-setting meeting in August, however, the BSP council from the rate reductions, given the early signs of a global economic recovery. In the second quarter, the local economy grew 1.5 percent, slightly rebounding from the 0.6-percent growth in the first quarter.

Nonetheless, the central bank said it did not have to raise interest rates, arguing that the economy still needed a lift to accelerate its relatively mild growth.

In the same press briefing, BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said inflation was projected to average at 3.28 percent this year and 4.02 percent in 2010, well within the official inflation targets set by the BSP.

The central bank wants to limit inflation to a range of 2.5-4.5 percent this year and 3.5-5.5 percent in 2010. For 2011, Guinigundo said inflation was projected at 3.4 percent.

Some economists have branded the central bank as too conservative in the conduct of monetary policy, claiming it could actually reduce its policy rates some more to allow a weak fiscal growth for the economy.

In response, Guinigundo said the central bank could not simply be aggressive in reducing its policy rates without taking into account factors that could create inflationary pressures.

"We are already seeing signs of improvement in the global and domestic economies. Financial markets have started to improve and foreign exchange inflows are on the rise. There are building blocks of demand premises, and so the BSP needs to be forward looking by monitoring possible buildup of inflationary pressures," Guinigundo said.

The central bank official said the current policy rates were already enough to allow growth without causing inflation to spiral.

BUSINESS Friday

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RP poultry company shows the way for Asean

By Roger Pe
Core Buzz

IN JANUARY 1992, ASEAN members signed the Singapore Declaration, which became the heart and soul of Afta (Asean Free Trade Area), a comprehensive program of tariff reduction in the region.

Over the years, the initial program of tariff reductions widened and other "Afta plus" activities were initiated.

This included efforts to eliminate non-tariff barriers, harmonization of customs nomenclature, valuation, procedures and development of common product certification standards.

Sensitive agricultural products and commodities like rice, among others, were included in this agreement.

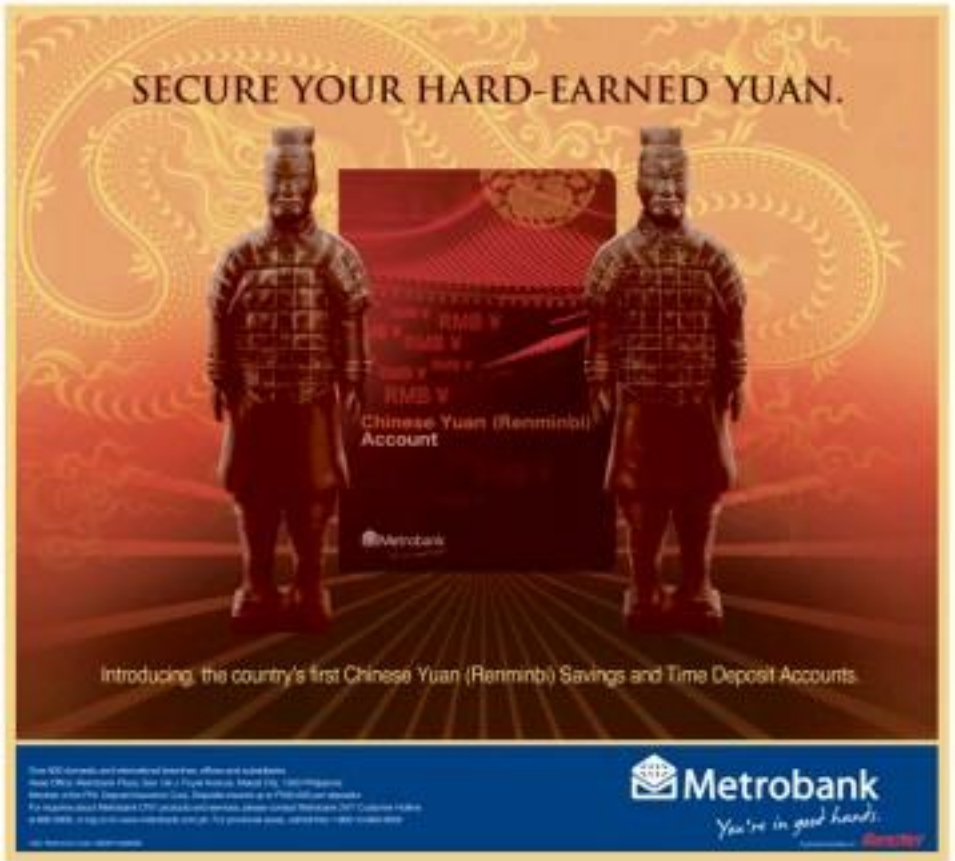
General exceptions however, were products deemed by Asean members necessary for the protection of national security, public morals, human, animal, plant life and health, artistic, historic or archaeological value.

Now, the clock is ticking. Asean members have until 2010 to reduce the tariff levels to zero to 5 percent.

The final tariff is scheduled to be reduced to that level starting January next year, and many

B4 POULTRY ECO

AGILITY wins trophy for RP



Social marketing and shaping voter behavior

Q: IT WAS LAST MONTH that you wrote a column on how your social marketing can sell Noynoy in step as the leading candidate in the race for the country's president. We're the same NGO who asked you the question that you answered in that column.

Most NGOs in our environment are now debating the issue about which is the better question to ask in the presidential survey. The issue came from the challenge that UP Political Science Professor Benito Kintanar, in newspaper columns, has exposed.

Professor Kintar has favored the close-ended "choose one name from a list" question as against the open-ended "choose 3 names" question. The logic for the "choose one" method is clearly explained. In the coming May 2010 presidential elections, "the voter will choose just one candidate and not three." The logic for the "choose three" question is not as clearly explained and there are several of reasons offered by several quarters including the Social Weather Stations (SWS). Will you please clarify? Which is the better question to ask?

A: Yes, we'd like to clarify first the first thing to make clear is your impression that the column you referred to was about how to market Noynoy so that he can win in the leading presidential candidate. Noynoy was the specific case we used to explain how social marketing can help a particular presidential candidate win the election. This is why we ended that column saying that the social marketing approach is about how to shape voter behavior for any candidate. "It's a versatile model. It can work for any other presidential candidate." Using the model, an appropriate campaign can be developed for the second-, third- or even fourth-ranked candidate aimed at matching, and then excelling Noynoy's share of votes. It's a matter of having the necessary voter response and behavior data."

And now in your question: "Which is the better question to ask in a pre-election survey: the 'choose one' or the 'choose three' question?"

There's a group of social researchers (where the Senior Editor belongs) which still answer this question by first asking "better for whom?" We say "a group" because there are many groups, each with its own different reasons. Our version of social marketing believes that in an issue such as this, classification is facilitated by first being clear about the clientele or the beneficiary of the data from the survey question.

For example, the reason why Professor Kintar favors the choose one question is because, as a professor, he wants to know who will most likely be the actual winner in getting the most votaion share of votes. It is the choose one question that clearly will answer that preference and give the most realistic share of voter behavior.

In the case of columnist Billy Esposo, who has made it clear to everyone that he is for Noynoy, he prefers a different kind of share of votes statistics. He still hopeful and not-as-busy-as- brother candidate (Chiz Escudero). After that, we'll consider the case of the current leader, Noynoy.

Marketing Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Andy Roberto

Even though he may not yet admit it, he needs a number that will favorably feed their committed support for Noynoy. For this purpose, it's just as close that the choose three question is better because it will, by definition, show a much higher share of votes in favor of his candidate. That's another interesting in addition in being share of votes boosting.

Too personal

But this is not the only reason why social marketing tells us the three choose one character question. The Billy Esposo-type logic is too personal and subjective. The more acceptable logic is objective and more strategic.

The choose three question is more objective because it's suitable by both Noynoy and the other candidates. Even more functionally, we should mention that the robust form of social marketing can and will use data from both questions but for different reasons and beneficiaries.

Villar and Chiz

What about having more strength? We explain by visualizing the two contrasting cases of non-leading candidates versus the leading candidate. We then take up the case of non-leading candidates, esp. the second-ranked (Manny Villar) versus the third-ranked (Chiz Escudero) for a voter segmentation campaign.

Something similar can be strategically developed from the choose three data for Chiz's share of votes. In addition, especially in the case of Chiz, his campaign strategists can validate and analyze the phenomenon as noted in the voter media evaluation about the prevalence of low-involvement voting behavior and in certain geo-voter segments. Low involvement voting behavior means voting according to top of mind awareness of a candidate. The candidate's name recognition, honesty, vision, friendliness, approachability and other "virtues" (imagined or real) are, at best, only secondary considerations, and at worst, have nothing at all to do with the voter's decision at the point of voting. This is the case when the "top-of-mind awareness" means commanding top position in media exposure and saying there. That's one reading of Chiz's gamble in bolting the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC). He certainly grabbed the top-of-mind awareness headlines. But how many low-involvement voters did that seem generate in terms of top-of-mind awareness? And how much share of votes did that gain to share of awareness can't be later? The answer should be in the next SWS or Social Atm polls. It's a completely another question to ask whether that share of awareness and share of votes gain will easy or not.

Noynoy

What about in the case of the currently leading candidate, Noynoy Aquin from the psychological advantage that the Noynoy camp are genuinely feel their the much higher "share of votes" in the choose three data, there is also a strategic winning feature. It's analogous to what we've explained in the preceding.

Noynoy's campaign strategists can secure top-of-mind awareness when Noynoy is already the voters' first choice in he where his voter retention campaign should be kept going on. On the other hand, where (or to what geographical voter segmented group) is a good second choice is where to target voters to elevate him to be their first choice as that his share of voter number can be raised even more.

In there's one long answer to your short question. And that's why we always say social marketing looks at how to shape voter behavior. This is especially true for a low involvement case such as in the coming May 2010 voters' choice of president that for most voters is taking place in five to 10 minutes in one day. And now every six years in their lives. Plus consider what these silent majority voters say about our past presidents: "Hindi naman kami naiboto sa kahirapan ng sino man sa mga yan." The past president has done something that got on one of poverty. But from many voters, have succeeding for a president in the coming May 2010 elections for high involvement?

Thanks for your questions. Keep sending them in at mrktrxinterpret@gmail.com or Marketing@philstar.com. -Ned/Andy

Goings-on

PR Gaz Haus franchisee tops search

THE REBELLY OF A FORMER OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKER (OFW) turned entrepreneur won this year's Model OFW/Family of the Year Award (Mofya) for Region 3.

George Zuñiga of Zambales, a PR Gaz Haus franchisee, is one of 34 other regional winners who will compete for the national title.

The March 2010 grand coronation will be announced today at The Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila.

Mofya is a project of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and the Department of Labor and Employment, in coordination with different Public Employment Service Offices in the regions.

HK finance boutique opens Manila office

TFC CAPITAL LTD., THE CORPORATE FINANCE BOUTIQUE OF Hong Kong-based Trade Finance Corporation (TFC) Financial Group, has opened an office in Manila.

In the midst of the global economic slowdown and recent challenges faced by the country, the company is bullish about the Philippines.

TFC Capital (Philippines) Inc. managing director Nanette F. Tayao said: "TFC has closed many transactions in the real-estate sector in China and is now bringing this expertise to the Philippines. Since 2008, TFC has been exploring the Philippine market from its base in Hong Kong and has confirmed its commitment to make Manila one of its key growth offices outside its home base."

TFC Financial Group has subsidiaries involved in trade finance, insurance, and offshore company services mainly focused on China, but its corporate finance business has been expanding globally these past few years.

Emerson launches new UPS product

EMERSON NETWORK POWER, A BUSINESS OF EMERSON, HAS unveiled its new Liebert PSP uninterruptible power supply (UPS) for PDs and peripherals.

Developed on the proven platform of Emerson Network Power's critical power protection technology, the Liebert PSP takes into account the growing need for clean and reliable power in office mushrooms and other small and home office critical applications.

The Liebert PSP delivers cost-effective power protection in a compact package as well as availability at the most effective cost. The model is available in 500VA and 650VA ratings.

AXA launches investment product

AXA PHILIPPINES HAS LAUNCHED ITS NEWEST, MOST INNOVATIVE variable life insurance product called SG-Invest or SG-I, which officials say "built for the crisis."

SG-I is designed to provide investors three guarantees—100 percent capital protection, where as of as high as 130 percent of their lump sum investment, and life insurance coverage of at least 125 percent of their single premium. It also offers policyholders unlimited earning potential by giving them the chance to invest in the stock market.

For more information about SG-Invest, visit AXA's website at www.axa.com.ph, call (02) 1870-AXA (2292) or (02) 3231-AXA (3292), or visit any AXA branch or AXA branch and look for an AXA financial executive or advisor.

BPInoy Learning Series for OFWs on

THE BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS CONTINUES ITS EFforts to provide financial literacy to its clients, especially overseas Filipinos and their beneficiaries. As part of its initiative to teach overseas Filipinos various financial solutions and management, the Bank of the Philippine Islands recently conducted BPInoy Learning Series caravans in Cebu and Baguio in Oct over the past month.

The BPInoy Learning Series is part of the BPI's Expat Pinoy Program to reach out to BPI clients as well as other overseas Filipinos and their families. For 2009, BPInoy Learning Series caravans have been held in Iloilo, Davao, Dumaguete, and Bacolod, among others.

The BPInoy Learning Series is implemented through caravans usually held in malls or private function rooms. Since its inception in 2005, BPI has held more than 80 such caravans all over the country.

RP poultry company shows the way for Asean

From page B1-1

businesses across different industries are invested about being a sizeable chunk of their competitiveness.

When it comes to preparing for global competition, it is inspiring to see some local companies doing their homework diligently.

Instead of worrying, one particular company has put in place a business infrastructure designed to cope with Abia's full implementation.

This is the Bounty Group of Companies Philippines, which was recognized recently by its peers in Asia as a model for setting new standards of excellence in many facets of its operations.

It also bode great to look in the glory that it has given the country in the Asian Livestock Industry Awards in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Bounty Fresh

Under the umbrella of the Bounty Group is Bounty Fresh Chicken, its flagship company and currently one of the fastest growing broiler integrators in the Philippines. Also one of the biggest and most reliable suppliers of value-added chicken products like fresh-chilled chicken, cubic eggs (eaten into hotel, restaurant, institutional food companies as well as supermarkets) and live food markets nationwide, Bounty Fresh Chicken recently entered the food retail scene via company-owned restaurant stores under the trade name "Chooks To Go."

Currently, the company operates the country's largest number of vulcanize stores with more than 400 outlets across the country and with more stores in the pipeline.

The Bounty Group is the only fully integrated poultry company that has nutrition really invested in company-owned facilities—Ground Parent Farm, Breeder Stock Farms, Hatcheries, Growing Plants, Feed Mills and Cool-cell Broiler Complexes.

The integrated operation comprises a dozen hatcheries across the archipelago, four broiler plants and 14 feed mills serving the rapidly growing requirements of its breeders, layers and piggery operations. The newly opened Dubai Feedmill is considered the most modern in the Philippines today.

Bounty Fresh Chicken was established in 1993, in order to commence in the contract registered broiler business. The company now owns 21 branches across the country each one having its own hatchery, broiler farm, feedmill, processing plant and sales force to make homegrown live broilers and freshly chilled products available all the time.

It has tie-ups with more than 600 business partners for contract growing, hauling, toll hatching, toll feed milling and toll dressing. Technical assistance and supervision, training, and transfer of technology are provided to its business partners to maximize production quality and consistency.

Over the past three years, Bounty Fresh Chicken maintained the best dressing plants in the country, awarded to both the AAA (Philkor Plant) and AA (San Pablo Plant) categories by the National Meat Inspection Service. Likewise, Bounty Fresh Eggs is the market leader in the country, the only egg brand in the country fortified with Selenium, a mineral element that prevents cancer in human beings.

Landmark event

In a landmark event where Asia's top poultry and livestock producers gather every two years, the Bounty Group won the top award for its Asian Operations in the biggest gathering of livestock, egg, meat and feed producers held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Center last Oct. 27 to 29.

In hosting countries like India, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and other countries in Asia, the Philippine entry officially become one of most recognized experts in the Asian livestock industry. Thousands witnessed the event filled at Livestock Asia 2009.

Prior to winning the award, Bounty Group was one of six finalists for the prestigious regional competition, recognized and acknowledged by the Asian Agribusiness Publications and AMR Exhibitions.

BOUNTY Group of Companies president Tomyson G. Chan and AMP Carmelita Ching (first and second from right) during awards ceremonies held at Kuala Lumpur Convention Center.

First award

The win was the country's first award of this magnitude in Livestock Asia. Interestingly, the Charoen Pokphand Group of Thailand, the biggest player in the region and a past winner (2001), paid a courtesy call to President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang recently.

Leong Hup Berhad of Malaysia was awarded in 2003, PT Japfa Combined Tbk Indonesia did it in 2005 and Sugana Poultry brought home the award for India in 2007.

The Asian Livestock Industry Award was started in 2004 by industry experts to advance integrated feed mill, hatcheries, chicken and layer operations' impact in the region. It has grown to be Asia's most prestigious and premier award-giving body for outstanding achievements in the industry.

Presented every two years to a livestock producer that has shown great potential and growth dramatically and in the region, the nominees are judged by an independent panel of Asian animal caregivers, namely: industry leaders like use of technology in operations; health and safety; and marketing and promotions.

The award is "a testimony to the company's vision of becoming a world-class brand or integrator—creating value to our customers," says Tomyson G. Chan, president of Bounty Group.

Winning Asia's most prestigious award in livestock industry puts the Philippines on the excellence map, giving a tremendous boost to the local industry. An achievement worth crowing about, it's another feather on the Philippines' cap.

Epson takes direct route to key buyers

From page B1-4

"We've continuously improving our relationships with our dealers and end-users, and we're upgrading the quality of our customer service," he says. "For the vertical and corporate markets, quality and accessibility of service are a must. With them, long-term relationships are more easily maintainable."

On the retail side, he says Epson will continue to employ the "unique selling strategy" that it has been using since it set up shop in the Philippines in 1998.

"It's a partner and end-user engagement strategy. We engage all of those involved in the supply chain. We take care of our partners, and at the same time directly involved in end-user demand generation," he says.

So far, he says the company's marketing strategies have been paying off.

To date, Epson has recorded a 40-percent growth in easy-invest, single-function printer sales vis-à-vis last year, he says. Its multifunction printers have also gained more traction with consumers, registering a 33-percent sales increase.

The company has sold 60 per cent more projectors this year than in 2008, 33 percent more passbook, and 25 percent more point-of-sale printers, he adds.

"Both our retail and corporate segments are doing well," he says. "Demand continues to grow, and we want to take advantage of this."

Flying V answers car owners' call for help

Oil firm also on a campaign to make entrepreneurs out of jeepney drivers

By Amy R. Nuesa

IT HAS BEEN A MONTH SINCE ORMOC and Iloilo provinces in the Visayas were hit by typhoon Frank, leaving more than 1,000 people dead and thousands more homeless.

Flying V Philippines continues to reach out to those who were affected by the massive flooding.

Flying V teamed with gas distributing rival Petron Corp. to provide relief packages—over 30,000 that were brought to the region's coastal towns and northern parts of Metro Manila—that went on to give 1,000 car owners a complete oil change package last Oct. 21 and 31.

With the Oplan "Balik Andar" program, Flying V and Chemoil Corp. had sought to help private motorists get their flood-swamped cars back on the road.

Flying V expanded this program by giving a "complete lubricant package" to 1,000 jeepney drivers and operators last Oct. 30 and 31.

The independent oil firm had signed a memorandum of agreement with Utak, the party list organization representing the transport sector, to allow the members of the transport group to avail themselves of lubricants under the relief program.

With the agreement, Flying V had made available a designated station in (1) free package consisting of flushing and lubricating oils, upon the certification of Utak that the driver was a member and a typhoon victim.

The package normally costs P1,247.50, but qualified drivers were asked to pay only P200.

"It is recognized that many of the vehicles used by the transport groups had been grounded as a result of the flooding caused by typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng, and have to undergo needed servicing before they can be safely put back in operation," Flying V said.

"It is also recognized that the cost of an extensive flushing and lubricating procedure are quite expensive, which prevented many in the transport sector (from immediately) undertaking such servicing and restoring their livelihood endeavors," the company added in a statement.

Proceeds from the program were pooled into a Typhoon Fund, which Flying V and Utak had used for joint typhoon relief and rehabilitation projects.

According to Flying V, the victims were able to raise more than P500,000 for the rehabilitation program aimed at helping jeepney drivers become small-scale entrepreneurs.

The details are still being ironed out with Utak, said Flying V spokesperson Joey Cruz, but the idea is to give jeepney drivers a small retail business, such as selling lubricants, grocery and jeepney spare parts.

Recently, Flying V also joined a major rehabilitation activity with ABS-CBN Bayanihan in Angono, where a medical mission, "Sagip Pamilya," and a "Feeding Program" were conducted.

As Flying V aims high to help the public, Lubewell—the aviation arm of the company—has been actively supporting the United Nations.

Lubewell was tapped to assist in the distribution of relief goods to Northern Luzon for its fuels and refueling needs.

"Flying V will continue to extend its assistance by providing quality fuels and services. With a network of almost 400 outlets nationwide, Flying V continues to drive its way to people," the company said.

JEEPNEY drivers, owners of cars damaged in "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" get modest assistance from Flying V

Modern food exchange rises

CITY OF MALOLOS—TOUTED AS THE first, largest and most modern food exchange and cooperative business complex, the North Food Exchange (NFEx) of Bulacan held recently a consultative congress for the province's top cooperatives and small-medium entrepreneurs at the B'Mall International Hotel.

The Kongresong Pang-Asenso, the second of a series of conferences concerning the economic potential of the NFEx, highlighted updates on the design of the project's initial phase. It is a joint venture of the provincial government of Bulacan and the Southeast Asian Commodities and Food Exchange Inc. (SeAFEx).

Diane Cruz of the NFEx includes three major buildings that will host a wet market, meat and livestock products, processed food and groceries, fruits and vegetables, as well as garments, shoes and fashion factory outlets.

These modern structures, designed to be fully operational early in 2010, will also feature Asian and local jewelry, and Korean and Japanese products, courtesy of SeaFEx's foreign partners and investors.

The Kongresong Pang-Asenso featured exhibits by MNE's strategic business partners, including securities technology giant Bluemarble, bioenergy technologies pioneer Ingti Group of the UK, online agricultural marketing company 828store.com, and cooperative marketing chain store network Koop Mart.

Presenting the development updates, SeaFEx chair Josefina Dela Cruz, a former governor of Bulacan, urged the over 1,000 attendees to join the Pang-Asenso legion of the NFEx. She also reminded cooperatives of their role in creating a new economy that "emanates from the grassroots."

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NISSAN

NISSAN MOTOR PHILIPPINES, INC.

SOME members of the Epson community go on an incentive trip to Tokyo.

Epson takes direct route to key buyers

Japanese firm wants to be known for more than just basic printers

By Abigail L. Ho

IN THE 1990s, MANY FILIPINOS CAME TO know the Epson brand through its range of dot-matrix printers—the type that makes a distinct sound when printing, can print hundreds of pages at minimal cost, and find many government agencies and even banks still use.

Moving into the new millennium, the company's printer line evolved to include models that can print a considerable number of pages a minute, on special paper, and with better color and clarity.

MARKETING STRATEGY

What many Filipinos still do not know, however, is that Epson carries more than just office and home printers.

One of its large-format printers may have printed the campaign-promoting posters many voters saw during the May 2010 elections. Your boss' last presentation may have used one of Epson's LCD projectors.

Wide portfolio

"We actually have a wide portfolio, not only in retail. We also want to be known for our corporate offerings," Epson Philippines Corp. senior general manager Eduardo Bonoan says. "It's really all about awareness. Not many are aware of the breadth of our portfolio."

This is why Epson is always literally knocking on customers' doors.

"We have to change the way we do demand generation. We prefer to take a more targeted approach by going directly to the end-users. For retail, we have promoters who engage with the consumers in the stores. On the corporate side, we have people who almost literally knock on doors to make a relationship with the end users," Bonoan says.

Over the past few years, he says the company's approach to awareness building has been "individualized, and not broad as mass based."

He says Epson builds close relationships not only with its end-users, but also with its dealers and channel partners all over the country.

To achieve this, he says Epson is expanding its channels both in the Greater Manila Area, where 65-70 percent of the company's business comes from, and to other regions nationwide.

Extra effort

The company is also exerting extra effort to really get to know its channel partners, to adapt to the quirks of each one, he says.

"For example, our partners in the Visayas and Mindanao behave differently than those in Metro Manila. In Metro Manila, there is a distinction between retail dealers and corporate resellers. In the provinces, they're one and the same. So we have to adjust our business practices and deploy more people to reach base with them," he explains.

He says Epson is beefing up its marketing strategies, in a bid to pick up revenues by 10 percent this year and to increase its market share for different product lines.

A large part of its strategies has to do with upgrading the overall customer experience, both on the retail and corporate fronts.

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Editor: Thelma Sioson San Juan
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Fragrance launched at Jean Paul Getty seaside villa

It overlooks the Mediterranean Sea—summer's perfect blue

YOU HAVEN'T seen blue—the color blue—until you've seen the Mediterranean Sea.

A Pepsi thought, if ever he...but that's what crossed your mind as you stood at the Mediterranean on a hot summer day, its blue so deep, rich yet translucent.

It rolled on to the horizon, its color now matching with the sky. The line separating the sky and the sea was but a hair line—that impossibly exact blue.

And no other way, the top thought—to describe what a tycoon could see every time he set on the terrace of his seaside villa in the Mediterranean.

Last summer, celebrity fragrance creator Bvlgari celebrated its 125th year, this iconic Italian luxury jewelry brand also launched its fragrance. Allegra the couturier villa of tycoon and philanthropist Jean Paul Getty just outside of Rome.

La Posta Vecchia is a 17th-century palace built by Prince Orsini over the ruins of two ancient Roman villas beside the Mediterranean Sea. It had been the guesthouse for centuries of the Odescalchi Princes until Getty bought it.

Now it's open for special events.

It was apparent that Bvlgari launched Blv in this seaside villa, since it's a fragrance inspired by color: a summer color, stimulating yet calming blue.

Master perfumer Jacques Cavallier created Blv Eau de Parfum (I out of a number variants of the color blue—"spirited and tempestuous, radiantly, a breath of serenity" the fragrance notes said. He wanted to evoke

FRAGRANCE C

RECEIVING room of the villa made sparse for the launch. Right, Bvlgari necklace from High Jewellery Collection displayed for Save the Children auction during the launch

FACADE OF La Pause Heureuse

Fragrance launched at Jean Paul Getty seaside villa

DOORS of the villa have perfect symmetry.

From page C1

both intensity and transparency.

The fragrance starts with the top notes of fresh water, then the airy hints of star anise from China and Vietnam, and light and fruity mandarin.

Its floral elements are its absolute fruit Ivory along with jasmine petals. The woody elements come from natural vetiver from Haiti and patchouli flower.

Other key ingredients are soft and sensual hints from Laos, ylang flowers from Spain, the woody and aromatic undergrass, and luminous musk.

She is a refreshing natural scent, yet sensual and deep.

It's now in Manila, available in leading perfume counters.

TSG

THAPHNE and Bulgari the signature model Laetitia Casta at the launch

MAGGAN head Francesco Trapani

ANTIQUITIES fit the villa living room.

VILLA fireplace

HAVE ONE THOUSAND, WILL SHOP

Bazaar season brings back the joys of Christmas shopping

By Jaha Ramirez
Contributor

WITH THE GLOOM OF TWIN BILL DISASters named "Ondoy" and "Pepeng," we are facing the prospect of a dim Christmas. Since those struck by the calamities are rebuilding their lives, many are faced with the dilemma of whether or not to tone down their Christmas celebration.

But since the economy is a play of forces, a dynamic between supply and demand, the only way we could recover quickly is by keeping it vibrant and alive.

One weekend, armed with a P1,000 bill, I decided to do the round of Christmas bazaars. The rule of thumb, just like in any shopping jaunt, is to look around and window-shop, and practice restraint from buying the first thing that you see.

Tejue Provence and something organic

Over at Makati Sports Club, it was a banyday filled with something French. I grabbed a copy of April Tejano-Mandelman's book, "Provencalma." I've known April back in college and when she started writing for the then Globe-operated-owned Manila Times while moonlighting as editor to Lenny J. Cruz's MAN! magazine. She has accomplished so much. Founding Summit's Real Living magazine, hosting a TV show getting married and settling in South of France, having a baby and managing a business around along the way in her first book, she shares her funny and candid account of living a fish out of water when she decided to leave a highly successful career in publishing for a new life with her French husband in Provence. To order, log on to www.provencalma.wordpress.com and listen there that you read about it in this newspaper first as a discount.

I also met a couple named Flore and Kit Manicombe who are doing homemade jams in various flavors—strawberry with mint, pineapple with lavender or ginger, and the list goes on. They named their venture The Fruit Garden (www.thefruitgarden.net) and they sell their jams for only P150. They prepare the jams at home in small batches using organic medicine, like when it was done in France years ago. They do not use any preservatives. Their jams, they claim, will make one's mind travel and discover endless flavors.

Rivanda: That's connections of the crossed fashion house by Hubert De Givenchy has resulted in a new collection of prosaic blouses and a chance for the hippie look. That's collection came in mind after we met Aurora and Maria Ebeldier's friends of over-of-a-kind peasant blouses and Victorian dresses at Makati Sports Club. The clothes are part of Mrs. Ebeldier's collection from her numerous travels to France.

Sinsuvela: Jane Revuta has products made from honey sourced from the bee farm at the foot of Mt. Mahawiyao in Lipa, Batangas. The products range from wine honey to cider honey and massage oils made from coconut oil with honey (www.harinadasuhot.com).

JUPOL Lejano's book "Provencalma"

THE FIBER MILL'S manicure set for only P100

HACIENDA San Benito's honey products

INDIAN CI...

Charity party

THE TWO LUXURY BRANDS, Salvatore Ferragamo and Crystallized-Swarovski Elements co-hosted Stop Into Pink, a charity party recently held at Isola Bar & Grill, IFC, in support and raise funds for Hong Kong Cancer Fund's Pink Revolution. The Pink Revolution in Hong Kong Cancer Fund's month-long fundraising and education campaign in aid of breast cancer.

The Pink Collection by Salvatore Ferragamo made with Crystallized-Swarovski Elements that pays homage to both brands' heritage and in support of Hong Kong Cancer Fund was presented by top models Amanda S., Cara C. and Jocelyn Lukes during the press conference. The presentation was attended by the Global CEO of Salvatore Ferragamo, Michele Norsa; vice president for operations, Gruner Chiva of Crystallized-Swarovski Elements, Georg Wembacher; and chairman of Hong Kong Cancer Fund, Sally Le.

Stop Into Pink lounge theme party and fashion show was attended by celebrities including Carina Lau, Gossip and Joan Chan, Andrew and Fiona Yuen, Alex and Michelle Chan, Michael and Angel Wong, Kevin and Belen Chan, Kevin and Sabrina Lam, Stanley and Leigh-Chen.

The Stop Into Pink party venue had symbolic meaning, as Salvatore Ferragamo and Crystallized-Swarovski Elements put the runners of Tour IFC in pink light. In an iconic skyscraper in Hong Kong, Tour IFC was illuminated for four consecutive nights and had become a beacon to promote the importance of breast cancer awareness and early detection in women throughout the city.

Ticket sales of Stop into Pink were donated to HKCF. Moreover, the iconic sandals designed in 1956 with cage heel and the mini bag evening clutch from the Pink Collection were auctioned at the party for charity. Top models showcased the fabulous Ferragamo 50th Winter 2009 Collection & Pink Collection made with Crystallized-Swarovski Elements.

The Pink Collection is now available in selected Salvatore Ferragamo boutiques worldwide.

In the Philippines, Salvatore Ferragamo is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. (SSI) and is located at Power Plant Mall, Greenbelt 4, Rustan's Tower, Rustan's Makati, Alabang Town Center and Rustan's Ayala Cebu.

A-grade shopping card

AYALA MALLS HAS RELEASED the Ayala Malls A Card, a privilege card which offers discounts, freebies and perks in more than 1,000 participating dining and retail establishments.

A Card holders are entitled to unlimited use of the Gladstone Lounge in Glorietta, Market! Market!, Ayala Center Cebu, Trinoma, and the Family Lounge in Alabang Town Center.

More to this, cardholders get free use of the Glorietta e-Lounge for 20 minutes per day.

For style-essentials, enjoy discounts at your favorite fashion brands such as Folded & Hung, Giki Flower, Unbeatmate, Esprit, Adidas, Cinderella, Nike Park, Bayo, Nat' Nat', Escada, Escada Sport, and many more. Shop for chic local fashion brands, such as Avenue, Pino Leathermaker, and Hitesh Ceramicspike.

Food establishments covered by the A Card are TGI Friday's, Balinsasa, Fish Out of Water, Café Havana, Via Mare Oyster Bar, Café Mediterranean, 456, Chateau 1771, Banana Leaf, Gold Rush, and TCC Fish Cafe, to name a few.

Moviegoers with A Card can avail themselves of the Express Lane for ticket purchases and a 3-percent discount.

Cardholders also get invites to exclusive block screenings of big movies in-bet, lucky A Card members get to watch XMen: Wolverine for free last April. Some cardholders can look forward to getting free tickets to "Now Music," the "Twilight" sequel.

A Card holders can also get reserved seats for race to Ayala Mall shows on a first come, first served basis. Cardholders are also treated to exclusive invites to workshops on photography, culinary luxury and others.

Ayala Malls include Glorietta, Greenbelt, Alabang Town Center, Ayala Center Cebu, Market! Market!, Bonifacio High Street, and Trinoma.

Bazaar season . . .

Front page C1

Who would ever think that I would be able to snag a 30-carat bath set for only P950? Once on a trip to Abra exclusive Bellarosa Spa and Resort, I was hoping that I would find a French bath set made my shower. But instead I ended up with another high-end brand, Molton Brown.

Lately, I saw a booth of imported cosmetics, and was lucky to snag Ralph Lauren bottled cologne for only P150, with its original price still attached at P6,995. Me kept laughing because I kept saying that I would just use the macaroni belt from the vendor, unless I end up looking like Ursula Andress or Halle Berry from a James Bond movie.

There were my P1,000 in a single bazaar. And I still had to visit other bazaars that day.

Casa Y Jardin and Zonta Bazaar

At the food bazaar, one wonderful bazaar

I bought a super rich made from reverse oil mixed with pepperoni and essential oils of lemon and green apple from Inland States for only P120 (www.inlandstates.multiply.com). They came in a handy aperture, ideal for my bedside for a quick nasal relief before closing off to sleep.

Another booth, Hive Mill, sold bath products as well as manicure sets in pastels! Ideal for only P500. I bought a room spray with ginger mixed with cotton just to remove my beloved pets' smell on my clothing articles (www.thehivemill.com).

Mah. Antonio Bikan's. My Mother's Garden had a booth together with her designer daughter Leilee. They were selling Inalan! goodies and Leilee's handmade necklaces. I still have to try their home cooking at 8 Cuenca Street, Pasig City (0918-807-6958/9156845). The house is previous. Imagine dining amid a rich foliage and big heritage home designed by no less than National Artist for Architecture Pablo Antonio. Yes, have to call a day in advance for reservations.

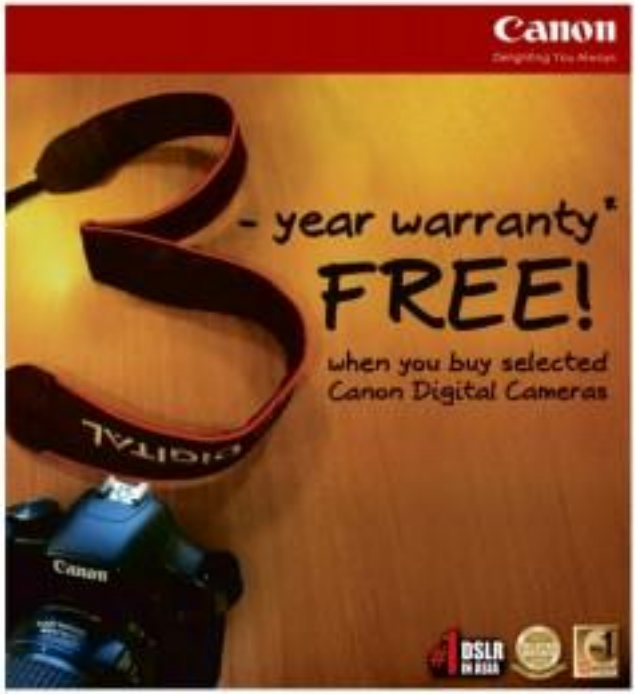
And of course, I won't miss the booth my new best friend, Dr. Rose Tanseco of Aesthetic Science. She does my monthly IPL Photorejuvenation, an FDA-approved treatment that uses laser pulse to minimize wrinkles and fine lines. Her clinics are on Jupiter Street and Madrigal Business Park in Alabang (www.aestheticscienceclinic.com).

Other bazaars in town:

Nov. 15—The 43rd International Bazaar 2009, PICC Forum, CCP Complex

Nov. 27, 28, 29 and 30—The St. James Great Christmas Bazaar

Dec. 4—The World Bazaar, World Trade Bazaar



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Citrus colors give her wardrobe extra punch

The woman behind the Filipino fine leather brand knows how to spruce up her lifestyle

IN THE DAILY business grind, an entrepreneur is just a chair of ordinary and inspiration with their novel ideas and gung-ho attitude.

One such entrepreneur is Rose Ann Marcelo Bautista, vice president for marketing and retail operations of Pino, a company known for its finely crafted and high quality leather goods.

Pino had its start in a home where, after seeing a void on the market for fine leather goods that were not imported or branded, Bautista and her husband, Nonnad, introduced their products to curious but very satisfied customers.

Encouraged by the market, they forged on and hogged one-piece accounts for which they produced and cover, fabric, agenda and the like. Ever short to streak, they took the mall boom in 1992 and put up their first store at Southview Zoo, Shangri-La Mall. To date, they have 10 stores.

THE WORKING CLASS

Rose Sibyan Go, contributor

Bautista graduated from De La Salle University with a degree in BS Commerce, major in Management of Financial Institutions. She also has a degree from the Philippine School of Interior Design. Both degrees have armed her well in the very competitive entrepreneurial field. Quiet, methodical and spontaneous, to boot.

Sprucing up

How does Bautista spruce up her multifaceted lifestyle?

Her closets is splashes of colors on her wardrobe for that extra punch—an orange raincoat, for instance, paired with grape tee, or tan-colby pants with fuchsia.

She puts a twist to a classic khaki trench by pairing it with brocade skirt, and matches an otherwise casual number with vintage jacket.

Bautista's husband describes his style as "silent beauty," a term he coined to define his classic taste.

New ventures

Bautista and Nonnad have a new venture—a leather furniture and fit called Jilian—to keep up with evolving market and be on par with the international scene. It is a point of pride for them that a Filipino brand can do it.

Bautista's schedule includes store visits, factory checks, fetching the kids, attending Mass, with some running thrown in. With this such, her typical attire is jeans and dressy top—relaxed and comfortable.

This entrepreneur sometimes feels like everyone wants or needs a piece of her. But she is clear and firm in her priorities—somehow easy is her family.

Spending time with her children, seeing them off to school, and just being involved in their lives matter most to her, as the weekday dinner is a dress she looks forward to hanging out with her husband, the perfect way to end a hectic day.

FUCHSIA collared one paired with black bracelet skirt by Vitar Perez

An orange raincoat paired with a grape tee? Rose Ann Marcelo Bautista pulls it off

ORANGE pieces to be worn by Vitar Perez, plum garnered by Jennie Moore and Floral blouse by Anne Klein

WISHING YOU A MERRY-LICIOUS CHRISTMAS AND A HASSLE-FREE CHRISTMAS PARTY!
Jollibee
PASKONG LANGHAP SARAP
PARTY PACKAGE
Bida ang saya!
Jollibee

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Belo's whitening product lives up to the hype

Story on page D2

Big savings and great value with Jollibee Spaghetti and Yum Value Meals now for only P50!

Make your spending count during these trying times with Jollibee's special price-off on your favorite Yum and Spaghetti value meals!

From November 1 to 15, you can delight in the lang-hap-sarap goodness of the Jollibee Yum Value Meal and the Jollibee Spaghetti Value Meal for only P50 each from its original price of P67. The price-off promo gives you big savings and great value so you can save your hard-earned peso especially during these challenging times. With the lower prices, Jollibee gives back to its loyal customers who no longer have to scrimp on food as they can continue to enjoy their favorite Jollibee treats!

Burger lovers can delight in the Jollibee Yum that's made with 100% pure beef patty and is served with Jollibee's own special dressing all in a soft bun. Fans of Jollibee Spaghetti can continue to savor this flavorful treat with chunky slices of ham, sausages, generous amount of ground beef that are served over premium noodles and topped with lots of cheese. The Yum Value Meal comes with regular Jolly Crispy Fries and regular softdrink, while the Spaghetti Value Meal comes with a regular softdrink.

So dash to your nearest Jollibee store now and load up on the affordable and value-packed Jollibee Yum and Spaghetti Value Meals for more jolly moments with family and friends. This special price-off offer is valid in all Jollibee stores nationwide.

Belo's whitening product lives up to the hype

BEA ALONZO reaches for Belo Essentials.

THERE WAS SOMEthing about the past few weeks that made me a little more nationalistic.

I came from SM grocery to buy some Christmas give-aways for the last fortnight, and was pleasantly surprised to see that the store didn't use plastic bags anymore, but boxes and brown paper bags to pack groceries in.

I told my helper that next time the boys go-cories for the house, we should support SM for its conscious effort to do something about our country's waste management problem.

There was also looking at some local beauty products available at SM and chanced upon Belo's body care line. Now, I am addicted to useless tanning products, though the Philippines is known for its whitening products.

KNOCKOUT! Ria Francisco-Prieto

Luckily, with the help of Cristalle, Vicky's daughter, I got hold of information and a goodie bag of Belo products. A friend who was addicted to skin whitening raved the products and she loved them. Not only did her skin lighten, she told me, the products also helped correct her uneven skin tone. Silently, she was impressed that it didn't dry her skin, which she thought went hand in hand with skin whitening products.

Apparently, Vicki's whitening line lives up to the hype—it whitens your skin while also moisturizing it. A comparative study conducted by a third party (a PRAI-accredited dermatologist was said to have found out that the product marks 84 percent better than the leading papaya whitening soap, while the lotion works 10 percent better than a more well-known whitening lotion.

If you're serious about whitening, you might want to visit these salons.

A friend swears it does whiten skin while also moisturizing it

WIN THIS!

We are giving away 10 Belo goodie bags to jumpstart your way to whiter, moisturized skin. Visit www.inquirer.net/blonde section for the coordinates!

Congratulations to www.inquirer.net's winners of Timex watch:

1. Jennifer Ghoa
2. Mora Rabago
3. Allan Leandro Marin
4. Ronald Aguilar

Join this week's contest! Log on now!

Once upon a time,

... And they lived happily ever after.

On November 7, 2009, on the occasion of her 18th birthday which will be celebrated at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel, Princess Micah will enter a world far bigger than she had imagined: A world of greatness where she will have the freedom to make her dreams come true.

Happy Birthday Micah!

from: Sun Life Financial

Calling all girls out there! Isn't this really a Barbie world? Stila's new Barbie collection offers extra-bright makeup colors that are not only pretty, but also fun, easy wearable and will last the whole day. So put on your pumps and get your credit card ready! Available at Beauty Bar.

STILA by enamel Barbie collection in yummy pink shades

Practical ways to care for your hands

GLOVES protect your hands from harsh detergents.

AFTER MORE THAN A DECADE OF washing clothes with my bare hands, I've taken to wearing rubber gloves recently. Not only does this preserve my nail polish, it also helps stave off some signs of aging.

In the same vein as applying eye cream as early as you can, caring for your hands way before they show signs of aging reaps good results in the looks department.

Here are no-nonsense tips to keep your digits as flawless-looking as possible.

Get a thorough manicure. Or if you live in the US and a professional manicure just doesn't fit your budget, make time for several-to-radical do-it-yourself manicures. This way, whenever you're tempted to rough up your hands, all you have to do is think about how much time it took (or how much money you spent) to achieve your perfect set of tips, painted in that super plush shade.

Recycle your skincare products. Go over your skincare stash and see other products (especially dormant pricey ones) you can "donate" to your hands. Some skincare products may do nothing for your pores and actually leave blemishes, but can actually be intensely hydrating for dry hands and cuticles. This is also a great way to utilize those free sachets of face cream from beauty magazines. Pack on your hand cream so you're easily reminded of massaging your cuticles when working on the keyboard.

Invest in good products. If you're not recycling your face cream, a luxurious hand lotion is a given splurge. But take note of other neglected hand products like the soap and dish-washing liquid you use in the kitchen. Around this time of the year, your family members abroad are probably asking for your bibs (wish list) for the holidays. Ask them to buy you bottles of an organic or environmentally-friendly dish soap like Clorox Greenworks or Method from Target. These formulas not only do not leave behind harsh chemicals in the environment, they're also gentle on your hands.

Mariel Cruz, beauty in the big apple

Moisturize them with those free sachets of face cream from beauty magazines

Tip also a big list of hand soaps from Kiehl's, Crabtree & Evelyn, and Pyrès & Pastilles (I particularly love the Olive Oil bar). These usually are too pricey for something that washes off in seconds, but I believe in the rejuvenating properties of good quality natural essential oils.

Buy two pairs of gloves—a snug-fitting one for the kitchen (to make dish-washing with gloves a more tactile experience) and another slightly soft and loose one to take to bed.

Just before you turn in, slather your hands with the richest balm or cream you can find. (Just make sure it contains no mineral oil as it renders this treatment pointless.) Once you've massaged your cuticles and liberally applied this cream, slip on the gloves and wear them for the night. You'll wake up with extra-soft hands that would only make you want to keep taking care of them better.

Ask a beauty question at http://Beautyinthebig@apple.com or visit Mariel's blog at http://MarielCruz.com.

Vanity Basket

Celebrity fragrances

Avon offers a wide array of best-selling fragrances perfect for every man, woman, child and their different moods, personalities, lifestyles and even aspirations.

From top Hollywood celebs like Halle Berry, Reese Witherspoon, Patrick Dempsey and Courtney Cox Arquette and some of the brightest local personalities of today have found their signature fragrances with Avon.

Ivy Calzado's representa Avon's bestsellers: Sweet Accents, Imari, Eternal Moments and Amara. Angel Locsin has Wishes Star of Fragrances featuring Wish or Happiness, Wish of Love, Wish of Peace and Wish of Luck.

Lucky Manzano and Nikki Gil are endorsers for Avon's Mo and Her scents, Just Play. Jet Ferreira is the perfect scent to match Pull to Butterfly's lifestyle.

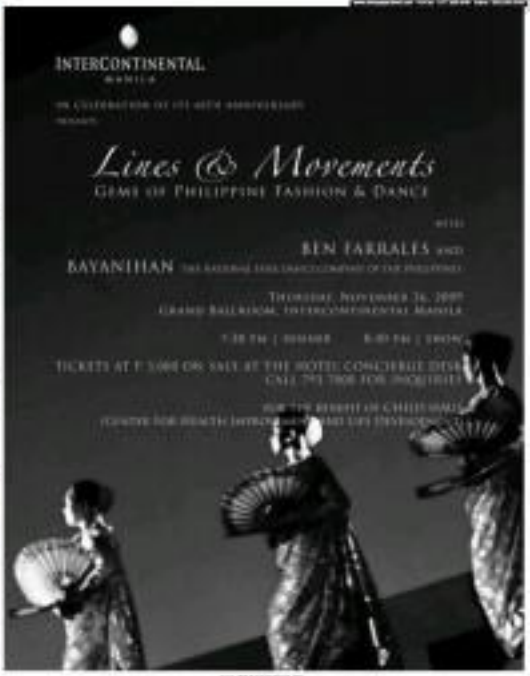
Call Avon Customer Hotline at 8643900 or visit www.avon.com.ph.

Nail art

California Nails & Day Spa offers fun, colorful, glitzy nail art complete with sparkling stones. It comes in a myriad of designs and colors, catering to different tastes and preferences. Flowers, bows, stripe, batiks, designs, fruits, fun letters and characters, hearts—the list goes on. It goes from girly to funky, abstract to stylish, fun to glam.

After thorough cleaning and buffing of nails, designs are applied using high-ly sanitized materials. A quick rinsum and polishing, nails are dried to make sure nail polish don't smudge. Nail art is also safe for everyone.

California Nails & Day Spa has branch-es at Magallanes, tel. 8529210; Market! Market!, 8981300; SM Supercenter Pasig, 7061085, 7061086; Robinsons Galleria, 6385217; Robinsons Midtown, 3850072; Festival Mall, 8485784; Glorietta Village Market, 4082334, 8948922; SM Pampanga, 9882036, 0980982; SM Mall of Asia, 5882167.



Gigi Amore

In soft shades of peach and taupe, or even in rich teal, fancy luxury in what lies beneath with SM Department Store's Gigi Amore lingerie collection

Fawn over

Sensuous shades of taupe and light brown complement any skin color

Pretty in peach

Precious jewel

Exquisite is all there is in shades of teal and turquoise

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Joey de Leon now wears his pal, Ang Kiukok

TEAM DE LEON. Jessa, Joey and Aileen

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THEIRNOY'S idea to honor National Artists? In the col- lection what you ex- pected?

I was shocked, amazed, labo hindi nakapagsalita si Kiukok (pun ang labo). Baka hindi pa ma-nakakuha ng balita ito dito. Ganoon ka- sosyal ang dating sa akin. Pero ano- mang kumbinasyon of all stars fashion- Maganda ang mod- els, maganda ang damit! Maganda kasi- get. Congratulations! Bagay ang Kiukok

Mabuhay!

Jenni J. Eppersen

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The T-shirt

The jacket

Bench, Human and Kashieca combine sex and celebrity for winning formula

Fashion show becomes fan screamfest

By Alec F. Vergara

STICKING TO A TRIED and-tested formula that has made it one of the country's leading mass-market brands, Bench, with kindred labels Human and Kashieca, mixed fashion with just the right dose of sex and celebrity to delight weekend shoppers at the recently concluded Philippine Fashion Week.

With SM Mall of Asia's atrium venued, Bench and company paraded some of their hottest celebrity endorsers... Gerald Anderson, Kim Chiu, Dingdong Dantes, Coco Martin, Enchong Dee, Isabel Oli and Alex Gonzaga—wearing the brands' holiday and Spring-Summer collections.

They were joined by Bench icons Richard Gomez, Lucy Torres and a cast of hundreds, including fashion lifestyle's Tessa Prieto-Valdes, comedienne Eugene Domingo and model-turned-celebrity Wilma Doesnt.

The three brands offered a good mix of wearable separates, including Bench's up-selling Overhauled jeans, Human's statement tees and cardigans, and Kashieca's versatile cocoon pieces, blouses and dresses.

But fashionistas would have to wait for Bench's biennial flesh-on-parade moment at the Big Dance. People behind the show were careful not to cross the line—not a single model was in undies. Girls revealed a little cleavage and ample legs, while hard-bodied guys in fresh jeans stripped to their waists.

Stylist Noel Macapagal, with designers Joey Samson, Reyan Leyva and Francis Calderol, gave each suite unique Filipino moods to be combining everyday wear with maliings, barongs and large kalle shirts.

Macapagal's add-ons included single arms dozens and fine embroidered shirts mimicking the Ifuraog. Apart from new pieces, fashion provoked some old favorite items to produce sophisticated jackets.

As usual, the affair was a crude gauge of a star's popularity. Gomez, Martin and Torres had their share of admirers, but the loudest cheers were for Chiu and Anderson. Theatrician's love team of the season.

Few can perhaps come close to Ben Chan, head honcho of Bayan Corp., when it comes to sporting diamonds in the rough. Chiu and Anderson signed up to endorsers even before they became household names.

Sometimes a good product isn't everything, especially in a show-biz-obsessed country like the Philippines. By regularly tapping the right celebrity endorsers, established brands like Bench can keep a fickle public interested and the cash rolling in.

KIM Chiu
PHOTOS BY ANDREW SORIANO

COCO Martin

Joey de Leon now wears his pal, Ang Kiukok

From page E1

Something new for the eyes.

How many years have you known Ang Kiukok?

I have known him since the mid-eighties. Alam na niya at sabi din nila. Magaling siya na ang isang bata na nong kinuha ko, dalo' nadalhin ako, nag-time ako at sa loob kung wala akong TV show. Kung wala akong ginagawa, nasa gallery ako. Nagpipinta na akong ng nag-ko-collect ng painting.

Since you always been interested in art?

I took up Architecture in college. In fact I wrote a comic strip for the Inquirer back in the 1980s for 3 ½ years. Ang pangalan ng comic strip ko ay "Joey to the Nth". Alagi nasusu kami sa Jose Mavsa. Mahilig na ako sa art. Iniisa pa lamang ako. I was already painting. So bahay, about ako nagpipinta. Mas time ako kay for art.

Is ang Kiukok your favorite?

I welcome all artists, basta art...Kaya lang, parang happy kami si Kiukok. Sinungaling sa panahon ko ang artworks niya. Maging friend ko siya, sinungaling sinab ito at nagpapasa ito sa kanya ang hindi nagagawa ng iba. At pagdating talaroak na tao niya, napakalaki ito siya sa mundo, nag-eastern siya sa "Eastern Lovers, Italian." Ito akanya ng mundo, si Rene Requiestas ay nagpapahayag ang sinusong mga pinakamahal na Kiukok painting, hanggang as such si Ang Kiukok na mismo ang hindi at dinala niya.

If Ang Kiukok were alive today, how do you think would he react to all this?

Ito dagdi na mayalawa' pero. Mayaya-tanda siya na hindi na mayanggal. Mahiyain pero at malusi. Pero at hindi niya, ibaping happy siya.

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Fashion store launches Ang Kiukok collection

"IN MY PAINTING, I FEEL FREE. I CAN express what I want to say."

Such were the words of National Artist and Filipino icon Ang Kiukok. And what better way to share his freedom of expression than to wear his artwork.

Penneway for Ang Kiukok National Artist Collection Series is a fabulous new collection between Penneway and the National Artist. Now you can display your love for Ang Kiukok's paintings by wearing them on shirts and dresses.

Fashion and art are an orange bedfellows after all. The creative collaboration of fashion and art is reminiscent of the time between Louis Vuitton and artists Richard Prince and Takashi Murakami for their iconic handbags.

What's groundbreaking about Penneway's new line is to celebration our own art heritage. And Ang Kiukok is considered one of the brightest spots in our history's palette.

Talented young student

At an early age, Ang Kiukok already exhibited his talents in drawing while studying at a Chinese school in Iloilo. He caught the eye of painter Fan Sok Kling. He eventually went to Guadalcanal to work as an apprentice for two weeks, making billboards for movie theaters.

In 1952, he moved to Manila to study Fine Arts at the University of Santo Tomas. He studied under the guise of Philippine art, including Teodoro Kalaw, Diosdado Lorenzo and Jose Garcia Llanera. But it was one professor who discovered Ang Kiukok's great potential and took him under his wing—Abstraccionist and composition professor Vicente Manansala. Manansala made Kiukok's watercolor an example to his students.

A famous story among art circles is that when Manansala retired, he left many of Ang Kiukok's works in his locker. Upon his return, he found his locker empty.

Because of financial reasons, Kiukok had to drop out of college. But through Manansala's support, he finally put up his first one-man show in 1954 at the Contemporary Art Gallery, which featured 20 watercolors and ten oil paintings.

Ang Kiukok is most known for his cubism style, which began in 1958. Year after year

I couldn't decide what to get you.
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Fashion store . . .

From page K1

his work caught people's attention, even earning recognition abroad. In 2001, he won coveted National Artist.

Featured in Vicente's big Kinloch Nicanor Artist Collection Series are Br manuel's tee showcasing his famous "Palanggan with Catch" (1955); bright yellow A-line dress detailed with darshes of "Clown Heads" (1992); and coed's tee featuring the iconic Wagay Figure" (1982).

It's about time this revamp happened. Art, fashion and nationalism—it's another brilliant way of looking stylish and wearing one's pride on your dress. Here's hoping that there will be more artists' series in the future.

Jenni Epperson

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Gold is the trend in pearls

By Cheche V. Moral

Jacques Christophe Branellec, the next-generation pearl trader, wears them as lobe studs

WE'VE SEEN MEN sport diamond studs, but it was our first to see a man with a pearl stud on.

It's a bright, said designer Christophe Branellec, of the tiny cream-colored gem on his left ear. It's not for sale.

Keishi, which means "poppy seed" in Japanese, owing to their size, are little surprises of nature, produced by chance during the cultivating process.

"I see diamond traders wearing diamond studs. I'm a pearl trader, so I thought, why isn't a pearl stud?" said the young man, son of Jewelmer's managing director, his namesake, who's now learning the ropes of the business.

Branellec was with the Jewelmer team last week to present the jewelry brand's holiday collection at Executive 5, Makati. Despite the global economic climate, he said their market segment has been more resilient than most, allowing them a measure of optimism for the holidays.

For Christmas gift-giving, the company, for the first time, introduces gift cards in denominations of P5,000 and P10,000 in

One credit card, countless benefits

By Kristine Felice Mangunay
Photos by Jon Galan Pancake

The much-awaited holiday season is here. With just a few more weeks before Christmas, many are making plans to spend quality time with their loved ones. Dinner celebrations and reunions for extended families are being organized, while some are choosing to enjoy a much-deserved pampering by staying in a luxurious hotel.

"This time of the year is [one] spent with families and loved ones. It is also a time for reflection where people take a much deserved break from everything here! But while your Instant Citi Rewards is all about making these happen—where real-time Ilea Tan, Cards Business Director for Citibank Philippines.

The country's leader in credit cards teamed up with the popular Shangri-La hotel chain to allow its cardholders to put their loyalty points to good use. Given as much as 30% when you book their lavish suite at the Makati Shangri-La, dine with your special someone at Shang, or to simply take home those over-the-counter purchases. These rates that will surely make your special summer-one's day.

Cardholders of Citi Classic Visa and Mastercard, Citi Gold Visa and Mastercard and Citi Platinum Visa can redeem Points for all-purpose. These Rewards points do not expire and are usually spent towards redeeming items from Citi's seasonal catalogue.

"Our catalogs carry a wide range of items – from personal accessories to electronic gadgets to shopping and dining gift certificates. You can also redeem air miles or contribute your Rewards Points to a good cause by donating them to charities," explained Tan.

"While we will continue to create printed catalogs, there is also something to be said for hang-and-breathing catalogs. This is the thinking behind Instant Citi Rewards – giving our cardholders the chance to spend their Rewards Points in the physical stores they frequent."

With Instant Citi Rewards, Citi cardholders now can throw types of currencies – that is Points, Card and Cash. When you choose to pay with points, you can do so up to 50% of your total bill, and charge the rest to your Citi card. "It's just like getting the best for free," said Tan.

In Shangri-La hotels, including Makati Shangri-La, EDSA Shangri-La and Shangri-La Mactan, Citi cardholders can pay up to 60% of their dining and accommodations expenses using Rewards Points. At Makati Shangri-La for example, they can treat to pool-side treats at the trendy Circles Event Café. Rest and then overlook Shang

CITIBANK'S Cards Business Director Ilea Tan and Makati Shang's Sergio Mazza, Food and Beverage Executive Assistant Manager

HIKARI! Shangri-la's Reia Kitano, General Manager

SATISFY your cravings for Japanese food at Makati Shang's Inagiku

With a Citi credit card, you can have it all

ENJOY dinner using your Citibank credit card

Points using their Rewards Points.

"Here at Makati Shang, our visitors can enjoy all kinds of food, from Japanese to European cuisines. We have professionally trained cooks who serve the best food in the town," said Sergio Mazza, Food and Beverage Executive Assistant Manager of the hotel.

On top of the Rewards program, Citibank also introduces the Dine for Free program. Cardholders who choose to pay for their meals with Rewards Points in select dining establishments at Shangri-La hotels earn a host of prizes – from a 10% discount on their bill or even have their meals for free.

"Cardholders who use their Citibank card will be given the chance to pick a scratch card. If they pick the 10% card, a 10% discount on their bill will be given to them. They can even have a 100% discount if they are lucky," added Tan. It's that simple, convenient and hassle-free.

What are you waiting for? Book a room at your favorite Shangri-La hotel and enjoy your numerous benefits with your Citibank card.

One card, countless benefits. Who knew one credit card can actually have it all?

Promo runs until the end of January 2010. For more information, log on to www.citibank.com.ph. Call 845-8888.

CHARISMA Sarita and Stephanie Zubiri

ERIC Soriano, Jasmine Malvehehe and Kim Rea

AMARERE Mark Hiller with southern cousins Alana Marmolejos and Albertito Lopez

NOOKA Inc. founder and designer Hamilton Waldman, Robert Castañeda and Raffy Pierucci

HYPHENA Valencia, business to wife, cook book author Ro

Chic timepieces launched

TALENTED ARTIST AND BRILLIANT designer Matthew Waldman had all the chic invitees going gaga over his Nooka timepieces that are renowned for their ingenuity, daringness.

The Nooka event last week was held at the chic "it" place to be seen The Fronthall-ians in The Fort.

Its creator Matthew Waldman and local distributors, successful business entrepreneur Raffy Pierucci welcomed us in a night of distinct Nooka fun, enjoyed by society's hippest set, pulangguis.

Nooka reinvents the way you look at time with its innovative watch designs, shapes, by introducing graphics and limited supersensations like dots and bars. A fantastic way of viewing time, the visual must increases as time passes, explained the super amicable Matthew, to lots, dahlings.

Wonderfully hot Kat Florendo attended Nooka watches to keep as "Nooka Lady of the Night," and Mark Hiller as "Nooka Man of the Night."

Nooka offers style that's just sheer and beyond freedom. True enough, its unique time-watching concept will surely have you going gaga over Nooka, dahlings.

Check out www.nooka.com. Nooka is available at Rafael Jewellery in Edsa Shangri-La Mall, My Diamond store in Gateway and Glorietta 4 and My Temple in SM North Edsa and Robinson's Place Manila.

KAT DELOS Samar-Florendo shows off her winning Nooka

VINA Morales and Dondi-Ren Villarama

Showcase of beauty and style

Fabulous, beautiful faces were visible at the Philippine Fashion Week in SMX Convention Center. Were you there, dahlings? It was a whole week of beauty, fashion and style at the Mall of Asia complex.

The Cream Silk Sensitives' show, pulanggus, featured ready-to-wear Valera and Trends Collection. The Spring/Summer 2008 show had loads of the country's most talented designers showcasing their eye-catching creations worn by our top catwalk princesses, dahlings. Present at the event were host Anne Curtis, Dawn Chang, Rhea Valbuena, senior assistant media manager, and Anna Castillo, brand manager for Cream Silk, and her cute cute team, applauding each member on the ramp.

With tons of beautiful, flowing hair all over the place, it just had to be a Cream Silk super happening, di baits, pulanggus.

MANG manager for Cream Silk Anna Castillo and beautician Teresa Herrera

DRESS by Tippi Ocampo

DRESS by Kristof Tan

Beth Romualdez's book

All over the world October is celebrated as Breast Cancer Awareness month, pulanggus. Five years ago in October, in Pinatubo-ing for her 5th year of breast cancer remission, and her cookbook cookbook maiden book, launched her first cookbook, "Cooking Lessons." She donated all the proceeds in charity—"for free mammograms to indigent women." In 2007 and 2008, Beth together with Bellini Quimora, Libel Virata and Gaby Magsaysay-Ortigas organized Pink Kitchen and had an awesome "Foodie gourmet weekend" raising funds for breast cancer awareness.

Now, marking her 10th year of remission, Beth launched her second cookbook simply entitled "Cooking Lessons 2." Tons of relatives, friends, chefs, former students and food lovers attended this must-have

ANGLEVIER lovers Eunice Balingit

Cream Silk assistant brand manager Raiza Revilla, Makisa Lim and model Karen Fernandez

CLASSY hair stylist Geneva Sabino and Precious

GANDANG PINAY

Inherent Spirit

Madame B. Gutierrez

The memory of the past reminds a sense of excitement through refined expressions. A simple wave of hello, a friendly hand shake or a million cherished hugs seem alive whenever the feeling of love is experienced. The thought of living a special sense can't be never more behind, when I was watching the All Souls' day special movie last weekend. I noticed how many people religiously brought again candles, flowers and offerings for their loved ones who are "gone but not forgotten".

During the past three day long vacation, I had the opportunity to meet with some friends and spend time with my family. Three days gave me time to reflect, think and appreciate them. I cooked food and watched movies with them all day long. As a wife, mother and a friend, I know there are a lot of things to experience and understand. Actually, totally memento should always be well managed and treasured. That is why I always find time to be with each one of them. Despite the regular school days of my children, hectic office hours of my husband and occasional social gatherings of some friends. All Soul's day became so ordinary day.

The ordinary and the extraordinary is the matter me realize that it is better to value the elements of everyday life. Yes, the past will never be forgotten through moments of touching each others hearts, and showing how much you love and care for them is truly appreciated.

I realized how an accommodating smile, a tender touch or means of holding hand could be reminiscent of past moments. Truly appreciative of the things at hand to count to stay happy, content and satisfied. Through watching the evening news, I realized to see fortunate I am to experience what people at the cemetery are missing. So, as it woke up this morning with unending kisses and hugs from my children, I thanked God for giving me such wonderful angels around me.

That morning, I cooked and served my family some breakfast. the overwhelming sense of peace and tranquility permeate the atmosphere as my daughters brought out my Pink Water Body Spritz from the mini spray reflected the floral mist of lemon within the luxurious memory, which quickly brought to mind the sparkling everyday life of my family epitomized by the perfume.

The sense of touch and of small gifts wonderful moments. These refined expressions are sometimes kept unnoticed yet still cherished. Do not fail to give your unforgettable authority touch throughout your everyday routine. Give time to everything, especially those with the God and appreciate the things that are simple, ordinary yet never easily.

Share me your thoughts. Email me at kbc.gabriel@gmail.com.

Gold is the trend in pearls

From page F1

give the customer the freedom to pick from Jewelmer's Palawan South Sea pearl collection.

But is a single gift card enough to buy a baroque-shape pearl jewelry? Perhaps not. But with a couple of thousand pesos more, a woman can have, for one, the black pendant, a golden South Sea pearl suspended on an 18k pin and with a choice of leather or silk cord in a variety of colors. With pearl stores starting from 10 rials. Or Noli retails from P12,000.

Golden pearl

As if underscoring the lush state of the season, the brand's highlight this year is the South Sea pearls. Gold is the trend in pearls, said Brunelles.

Jewelmer's one-off pieces for 2008 make generous use of golden pearls, intricately set with diamonds, knight pearls and set in 18k gold. The Harlequin necklaces, for instance, is said to mimic the labyrinth that is Venice, with 123 natural golden pearls and 22.35 carat diamonds.

Pearls are said to be the most environment-friendly gems in the planet. The high-quality pearls are harvested only from the cleanest, natural environments.

Jewelmer, which is marking its 10th year, has its pearl farm and laboratory in Palawan, one of the most ecological. It pearl has pearls of the country's richest spots. For years to grow and mature a single pearl.

In the Philippines, the South Sea pearl has been named the national gem by virtue of a presidential decree. The cream

THE HARLEQUIN has 123 golden South Sea and keshi pearls, and 22.35 carat diamonds set in 18k gold.

JACQUES Chevaglio Brunelles of Jewelmer, new-generation pearl maker

SEVENTY-EIGHT golden South Sea and keshi pearls, and 9.70-carat diamonds in 18k gold make up the Mirage Parure (Pearl Shores) necklace.

PHOTOS COURTESY JEWELMER

try is one of the top three producers of pearls in the world, according to the Jewelmer website.

In South Sea pearl, which can grow to about 20 mm for the round shape, is the biggest and most sought-after.

Unlike diamonds, which are rated in value according to the so-called four Cs, pearls are graded using different criteria. Some, the sheen reflected on its surface; surface quality or exterior flawlessness; size; shape; colors, which is to "lustre glow"; and color. The last is a matter of taste, therefore subjective.

Women are traditional wearers of pearls, long charmed by their precious tribe of custom. But will men soon take to them, too, the way the young Beyonce has? "I don't know," he answered with a grin. "That's what I want to find out."

NANCY Hazel with husband Erlok Hazel

PARTY host Jose Rexon and boyfriend Mans Schreiner

GUYS representative Hunks Yambao (third from left), Jose Herrera, Bhing Lorenzo, Bobbie Aldaba, Kathleen Kate Sangco and Yana Hazel

PETTY Jordan, Cinderella's Theresa Santos, chef Gilbert Pangilinan and Marbella Pe

cookbook launching, all exposing the absolutely delicious love d'oeuvres from her cookbook and prepared by Le Soufflé chef-patisserie, Annie Sheridan. At last. The hardbound books were sold during the launch. Have worry, palanggins, the paperback edition is now available in leading bookstores. Christmas is just around the corner so it's a great gift for your pals, di bala, paringgan.

"Cooking Lessons 2" is a collection of recipes from her travels abroad, including her 6-month trip to India where she took a master course in Indian Regional Cooking at Sarma's Institute de Gastronomie Regionale d'Indie.

That is well-deserved boss. Both and all your pals for helping indigent women, dahlings.

Nancy Hazel's birthday

Leave it to that PR achiever, popular emcee of Nancy Hazel & Associates, looking great when she celebrated 66 beautiful fruitful years of fun exciting life, dahlings. The swinging 55 Bistro Place near Times Mosaics had guests pouring in, prepared for a long night of dancing and feeds of fun, dahlings.

Guests, including friends from Zona Mediterranea, Rotary Makati, Sweethearts of Christ Foundation and Nancy's elementary and high school classmates from St. Scholastica's, had a blast with Sound-masters, a band specializing in ballroom music, including the Boy Smith "blues".

Completely delighted over the turnout, it was no wonder our Queen For a Day was smiling all night long. After all, dahlings, today's 60 is the new 50. di bala, palanggins.

Promo also available at: •2/F Greenbelt 1 •3/F Digital Exchange Glorietta •3/F Robinsons Ermita •LG/F Cyberzone, SM City Manila •4/F Eastwood Mall •G/F Robinsons Galleria •4/F Cyberzone, SM Megamall •2/F Northwing, SM Mall of Asia •G/F Cyberzone, SM Marikina •4/F The Annex SM City North Edsa

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Editor Ermie G. Velunta

ENTERTAINMENT

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RP-shot UK film wins in fest

FILIPINO-British Rebecca Unsal won Best Actress for "Kristina," a United Kingdom film shot in Calatagan, Batangas, now two years ago. "Kristina" also won Best Director for Tim Cairns in the International Filmmaker Films Festival held in Kent from Oct. 26 to 29 this year. —Rayanni Sara Eduga Jr.

CHEER FACTOR

MMFF films with actor-politicos face Comelec ban

WILLIE may run, too.

BONG as "Panday"

ARA got sign-tigas.

"NAMAMAYAN" star

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE SUCCESS OF THIS YEAR'S METRO Manila Film Festival, which opens on Christmas Day, may just depend on the Commission on Elections.

Metro Manila Development Authority chief Bayani Fernando, also festival executive committee chair, said in a press con on Wednesday that those out of the seven official movie entries **even at risk of being banned.**

Fernando said the ban because Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. and losing champ Manny Pacquiao, lead actors in the fantasy film "Panday" and "Pinoykickan," respectively, may run **for public office in 2010. Comedian TV host** Willie Revillame, a core member of the comedy film "Asian," starring Dolphy, is also rumored to be joining the political race.

The possible ban may be brought on by Section 3(c) of the Omnibus Election Code, which prohibits "any person ... to engage in an election campaign or partisan political activity except during the campaign period (90 days before the polls)." Fernando said the Comelec **may consider the movies as campaign vehicles.**

MMFF executive member Boots Anson-Roa, also Mowelfund executive director, argued that **"the movies are anything but political."** It would be a pity for the festival to lose "Panday," **she said because disappointment.** "It is expected to be one of the top grossers this season—festival beneficiaries will be adversely affected." **She said the reason has submitted an appeal** to the Comelec.

Heber Lorenzo, GMA Films line producer for "Panday," said, "The movie is almost finished. We hope to get word from the Comelec right away so we can decide what to do next. We already want to know from the censors if we could **release another movie if 'Panday' is banned."**

Another censorial member, Manuel Nagal, president of the Philippine Motion Pictures Producers Association, said Comelec chair Jose Melo has, in fact, spoken in favor of actor-politicians. "Sen. Mina visited the Comelec recently to ask if she could still work as an actress even if she plans to run for Quezon City councilor. She **told her (GMA-7) soap opera and sitcom were** her main sources of income. Melo reportedly told her it was okay, as long as she wouldn't be campaigning on the programs."

Oscar hosts

STEVE Martin (left) and Alec Baldwin will co-host the 82nd Academy Awards ceremony. Martin has done it twice before (2001, 2003); Baldwin is a first-timer. "Opportunity of a lifetime," Baldwin said of the gig. "I'm happy to do it with my twenty." Joked Martin: Nominations will be out Feb. 2. AP

No thanks to eternity with Monroe

LOS ANGELES—Male admirers found Marilyn Monroe irresistible in life, but not to the afterlife.

A Irish boxmer auction for a crypt where her ashes has ended with zero bidders willing to meet the estimated $500,000 reserve for the spot, local media reported.

AFP

PAGH info "Mistress & Mistress," "Paano Ko Sasabihin?" and "Bala Bala"

Horror, laughs, love in Cinema One

By Marinel R. Cruz

A MYSTERY/FANTASY THAT FOLLOWS the journey of two supposed brothers; a horror-drama about a mysterious landlady and her tenants; a comedy about a woman's excesses and shortcomings; romance between a girl and a mad boy; and an inspiring tale of two children and a dog.

These were among the 2009 Cinema One Digital Film Festival which runs from Nov. 13 to 17 at the Gateway Mall Cinemas, Araneta Center, Quezon City.

The film fest is part of the 12th anniversary of the movie cable channel Cinema One, also on its programming Ronald Arguelles said.

Its film festival entitled "Bala Bala" which derives its title from the Bahasa-ish dialect and means "forward" in Tagalog—Frederik Aguilar wrote the spiritual-stitches area of Baguio, San Jose, Batangas to find out why the fire stocks are dying. Soon he discovers the horrors around and gets trapped with the town folks' belief that he's a healer.

"The story has "mystery and fantasy that's presented in reality" says writer and director Melvin Britto. It features Richard Quan, Glenda Bonnevelon, Yves Oliveg, Bald Mart Salazar, Jan Dilapo, Angel Jacob and Elijah Medina.

'Wasted: Border'

Religious fanatic Mama (taking cues a humbling license and cutesy. As a child she was suspected of being an unwary (witch), along with her grandmother (to her boarders disappoint one by one, more suspicious arise. Does she harbor them and/or their flesh?

The film's message, according to director Joey Gilvador is "Let's all help end the cycle of violence." It stars Rosanna Roces, Erlinda Rhyz Ibrahim, Bembim Yordoro, Manuel Aquino and Buffy Tejada.

'Mistress & Mistress'

"Mistress & Mistress" is the story of Mia, an obese woman with a ton of confidence, a lovely bank account and a healthy sex life. Liberia meant to be, but one day she starts to doubt many things from the scandal to the trivial, down to her waistline.

The film's cast includes Gil Cortez, Baron Geisler, Mikel Campos, Mishou Cristobal, Bianca Manalo, Mika Escribor of Paimate, Amanda Colley Von Cecil of Malate, and Janice Perez of Caloocan...some all "savvy strategists who played as individuals from day one," recounts host Paolo Bediones.

The castaways themselves admit that much. All are hooked up on old "favorites" episodes, particularly the 10-edition, to prepare for Palau.

"I picked up pointers on strategies," Shaun admits. A Manila City Hall employee, Shaun made sure to stay under his radar. "Keeping a low profile is my strategy, because I don't want to be a garden-variety threat."

It didn't work because most of his fellow remaining castaways were familiar to the fiercest and strongest competitors.

Fair enough, Shaun was booted out last Friday, Another elimination round is being held tonight.

'Alliances'

Jef, who's coach career with a worldwide multinational, remembers: "It's not just a game of strength; it's also a game of alliances. Another part is that some are too to be deceitful and betray our allies-to-win."

Justine, a transsexual beauty queen, points out: "In real life, we play, we don't strategize."

Amanda, a former construction worker from Alaska, admits that the show taught her patience. "Every time I was upset, I kept quiet."

Charles, the chubby businessman who lost 34 pounds on the island, positioned himself as the "underdog," too. He admits: "Minimize them with conflict on the island, I [was prayed]."

Mika, the resident chef, admits: "In the end, your mind can become your worst enemy."

The big winner of "Survivor Philippines Season 2" will be revealed on Nov. 15.

Surviving castaways all savvy tacticians

By Dayrel San Diego Jr.

AND THEY'RE BACK WITH FIVE...

The final five castaways on the GMA 7 reality show "Survivor Philippines: Palau" have gone through the wringer—overcoming hunger, feral fears and daunting mind games throughout their 39-day stay on the island.

All original 16 contestants—especially the final six composed of Charlie de Vera Fernandez of Dagupan, Shaun Rodriguez of Zamboanga, Jef Gallon of Manila, Mika Escribor of Paimate, Amanda Colley Von Cecil of Malate, and Janice Perez of Caloocan...were all "savvy strategists who played as individuals from day one," recounts host Paolo Bediones.

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KBS, for old times' sake

THE DEFUNCT KAMLON Broadcasting System has organized a celebration to mark KBS 9's inaugural broadcast 40 years ago, with a reunion dinner, ball and private show on Nov. 14 at the new KB Pavilion on Mareos Highway corner Turon and Country Village, in Cotabato.

Eladio Benedicto Paulino, executive dean of the organizing committee, invites all employees, talents, production and engineering personnel who worked in DXN 9, BBC 2, DXC 13, CDO Television, CDOB 4, SM CATV, AM and FM radio and provincial stations between 1969 and 1986 to confirm attendance with co-chair Babit Castro today. Call (057) 2020000 or 09183900000 or register online via sabit@email.com.

At its peak in the 1970s and early '80s, KBS was the dominant broadcasting network and had the biggest stars in its stable. Dolphy, Nora Aunor, Vilma Santos, Sharon Cuneta, Maricel Soriano, Janice de Belen, Smokey Mike Mallahan, Bobby Balding, Johnny de Leon and Ted Failon.

Top TV executives and other media professionals also found their skills honed there.

One Heart, two personalities

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

HEART EVANGELISTA IS ON CLOUD nine.

The Kapuso actress has just won plaudits on the big and small screens.

She plays Sharon Cuneta's rebellious daughter in "Mano Po 6: My Mother," her first mainstream film in five years, since "Bora sila."

Last year, her indie film, "Ay Ayong," was shown and it soon has been a Pamana entry for Best Actress. She's "overwhelmed" by that victory. "I did 'Ay, Ayong' when I was down, professionally and personally. I didn't expect to win."

The trophy now sits snugly on her bedside table. "It's the first thing I see when I wake up and the last thing I see before I fall asleep. I'm celebrating it, because eventually I'll have to go back to reality and work."

She's excited about "Mano Po 6," and tells the heavens that she has read the script three times. "I've memorized my lines, so I won't forget even if I get nervous (During the actual shoot)."

She's bound to get anxious. Sharon admits, because it's her first time to share the screen with Sharon, "one of the actresses I've always looked up to. I knew I wasn't the first choice for the role, but still I'm very happy."

To prepare for the part, Heart says she watched her favorite film, "Joy Luck Club." She's cramming on the "Mano Po" series, too. "I hope to watch all five."

On TV, she was recently cast as Richard Gutierrez's leading lady in GMA 7's remake of the Rosmanovela, "Full House."

"It's the total opposite of 'Mano Po,'" Heart says. "The show is a romantic comedy and I play a happy-go-lucky girl."

Woman Entrepreneur of 2009 is the brains behind San Marino Corned Tuna

This year's Woman Entrepreneur of the Year, Corazon Dayro Ong, is no less than the brains behind the highly successful innovative food product, San Marino Corned Tuna.

In an interview at the sidelines of the Entrepreneur of the Year 2009 awarding ceremonies at the Makati Shangri La Hotel on October 15, Mrs. Ong expressed gratitude for the Filipino consumers for their high level of acceptance for her latest innovation.

Mrs. Ong is the founder and vice chairman of food manufacturing firm CDO- Foodsphere Inc. She was adjudged Woman Entrepreneur of 2009 by Ernst and Young for her exemplary skills in entrepreneurship, leadership and community development - making her a trailblazer in Philippine business.

A nutritionist and dietitian by profession, Mrs. Ong showed excellence as a woman entrepreneur by putting up a small meat processing venture 34 years ago and steering it to become one of the pillars of the food manufacturing sector in the country today.

CDO Foodsphere has earned the trust and confidence of the Filipino consumer through consistent product innovation, strategic distribution and well-synchronized advertising and promotion, to push its cost-competitive products.

"But the key to the overall success of the company is the passion for continuous product innovation," says Mrs. Ong.

Under her leadership, CDO-Foodsphere has become a modern and leading food company known for its product innovation that provides the best quality and affordable food products, earning the trust of the Filipino people.

Mrs. Ong's latest innovative can be manifested from the success of her latest product -San Marino Corned Tuna which was launched on July 30, 2009.

ENTERTAINMENT

'Pre-vis' process helps the actors see how a scene will unfold

Fil-Am animator shows 'em what 'spectacle' is

LOS ANGELES—DURING HIS STRUGgling days, John Marin sometimes had to demonstrate on cut-his-roommate's-leftovers.

Today, the Filipino-American 3D animation artist has the power to make whole snowfall into the White House to command a tidal wave huge enough to wash over the Himalayas. Well, with his artistry, software and computer, the Davao-born John can conceptualize those spectacular scenes for a movie. So director Roland Emmerich's post-nuclear blockbuster, "2012," John and his colleagues did a crucial process that is called in the film industry as "pre-vis"—or previsualization—of scenes before filming begins.

In our recent interview with Roland, he talked about the importance of pre-vis, especially in a movie like "2012," an end-of-the-world thriller that has numerous special effects. He added that showing the pre-vis version of the movie to his crews helps them set in a scene where, for example, they have to react to a humongous tidal wave washing over some of the world's tallest peaks. "It helps the artists see what they're facing and gives them an idea of how it works with [other] elements," the director of "Independence Day" and "The Day After Tomorrow" told us.

John's journey has taken him as far as Siena (Italy), where he worked for six months on Peter Jackson's "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King." Now with Sony Pictures Animation's Virtual Development Department, John played a key role in creating the main characters in the soon-to-be-released 3D animation movie, "Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs."

Still sought-to 3D animation, John and his ilk in the film industry makes for an inspiring story. We thank Chris Isham of the Mindanao Times for the Filipino connection ("FC") tip about John.

What did you do as a 3D artist on "2012"?

I worked on "2012" only for a month on two pre-vis shots for the film, along with five others in my team at Sony Pictures Animation. First, the shots of the tidal wave going over the Himalayan Mountains as a result of the quake, crashing. The other shot was when a huge wave carries an aircraft carrier and crashes it into the White House.

I did the modeling of the environments in 3D, the aircraft carrier and the White House as well, which broke into hundreds of pieces. These, again, were used for pre-vis only. They lasted the actual shots off our work. So to be precise, the White House is more detailed on high resolution.

I did the same thing with the aircraft carrier shot. They eventually built a higher detailed model of the ship as well. After that, Sony Pictures Imageworks, which is the 3D animation part of Sony Pictures, and other studios did the bulk of the film.

What did you work on in "Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs"?

I worked for six months in Visual Development in help create the main characters of the film: Flint, Sam, Brent, and Flint's dad in 3D. We also developed a two-minute "short" version of the film. We showed the studio executives exactly what they would get if we made the film—as far as look, color, characters, etc. are concerned. Because of our "short," we were able to get the film green lit.

What other films did you work on at Sony

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MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT

THE rise of Filipino-born John Bustin (here with wife Angie) in the 3D animation field is inspiring.

Fil-Am animator . . .

'My first job paid $5 per hour, same rate for someone working at McDonald's'

Pictures?

At Sony Pictures Imageworks, I worked on "Surf's Up," "Chronicles of Narnia," "Harry Potter," "The Polar Express," "Open Season," "Hancock" "Little 3," "Zathura," and "Superman Returns."

When I moved to Sony Pictures Animation's Visual Development Department, I worked on "Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs" and "Open Season 2."

Were you born in the Philippines?

I was born at San Pedro Hospital in Davao City in 1972. My mother, Aurora Castillo Bustin (from Manila), was a nurse in that hospital. My father, Romeo Bustin, is from Davao City. He graduated from Ateneo de Davao University.

I lived in Davao with my grandparents, Juan T. Bustin and Valentina Bustin, until I was 5 years old. My parents, who were living in the States, brought me to the US. I was spoiled by my late Attorney and Lola Val.

My two sisters, Melody and Precious, were born in the States. I met them for the first time when my parents brought me to New York from Davao. The whole time, I thought my grandparents were my parents. But I soon realized that these were my real parents.

How did you get to where you are now?

After high school, I went to the Art Center College of Design and majored in Transportation Design.

Unfortunately, I was unable to graduate from Art Center because it was too expensive. All the money I had went to paying the school **tuition, art supplies and housing.**

I began to study Photoshop and basic 3D animation software. Slowly I worked my way into the entertainment industry. I only had 1000 per month for food, which is not much because **the cost of living in LA is really high. Sometimes** I would skip meals or eat my roommate's leftovers because I couldn't afford to eat out or buy groceries.

My first job was doing art and graphics for a small interactive company in LA which paid only $5 per hour, the same rate for someone working at McDonald's. But then (and for my lunch and gave me some basic training in Photoshop and basic 3D software. Then I moved to a larger company which required me to know high-end 3D software called Alias. I just forced myself to pick up a book and learn it on my own after work hours. My dad, who moved back to Washington State, said, "Either get a job in LA or come back home to Seattle, Washington." I decided to stick it out in LA and learn 3D modeling and animation with the help of my friends.

After two years of working in a small 3D graphics company, I applied at a large company called Rhythm & Hues Studios. I showed them my 3D demo reel and 3D art portfolio. They liked the fact that I could draw and do art as well as 3D animation. They also taught me their 3D animation software. I spent a month learning modeling, lighting, animation and compositing. That's the advantage of working for a large entertainment company – they pay you while you are learning. Years, I was able to make friends in the entertainment industry. I started giving lectures about 3D animation.

For three and a half years, I worked at Rhythm & Hues Studios on various films such as "Babe 2," "Speed 2," "Hurricane 2," and commercials like Coca-Cola's with a polar bear.

Then I got a job at Disney Feature Animation where I worked on 3D films such as "Chicken Little" and 2D title films such as "Mickey's Mail" homage reel "The Magic Lamp." At Disney I learned the 2D animation software, "Maya."

Can you describe your experience working on "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" in New Zealand?

It was a great experience to work on such an amazing epic film. I worked in New Zealand for six months. I was able to watch them film some scenes from the movie and see Peter Jackson and Viggo Mortensen in action. We worked 60-80 hour weeks, especially toward the end of my stay.

What do you like about working in this field?

The people are very talented, creative and hardworking. You are constantly learning new things and growing as an artist as well. You get paid to do what you enjoy so it doesn't really seem like a job because you are having fun! I'm currently at Sony Pictures Animation in the Visual Development Department so I get to be part of the creative process before a film gets made.

What advice can you give aspiring talents in animation?

Do anything you dream of doing and never give up. It's best to write down your goals and do whatever it takes to achieve them, whether it takes five months or five years.

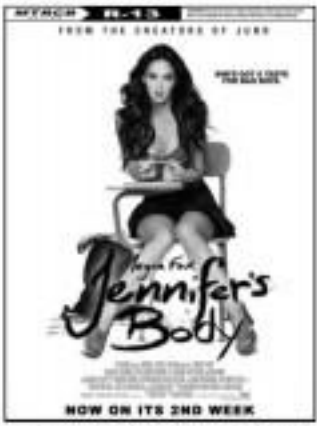
You will run into obstacles and hardships but you must do your best and find a way to overcome them. Try to be creative, but most of all, keep challenging yourself!

What are your thoughts on your journey as a Fil-Am artist so far?

Because of the support of my friends and family, and with the help of prayer, I am where I am today. My mother passed away over 18 years ago from cancer. I'm doing all of this for my mama whom I will always love. My journey as a Fil-Am artist has been wonderful. The things that I learned as a child from our Filipino culture and family values have helped me become who I am today.

I promised myself that I will do my best to attain all of my life's goals as well as do my best for my wife, Angie, when I have my own. We are expecting our first baby boy in December. Now, now I'm still learning new things to improve myself as an artist and soon-to-be father.

Email the columnist at mnguyen_fhm@yahoo.com *and visit his blog, "The Pinoy Report," at* http://blogs.inquirer.net/mpulvenport.



A pact with dad set him free

By Ernie Pedro
Contributor

MARVIN ONG IS ONLY 21, but his credentials seem to show that he's a seasoned performer.

This graduating Ateneo Communication Arts major says music is his life—he learned to sing at age 3—and that he's bent on pursuing a professional singing career.

Though he had performed in numerous staged by Trumpets Inc. in his grade school years, Marvin had to finish high school before his father gave him the blessing to chase his dream. Right after his high school graduation, he plunged head on, appearing in two stage musicals.

He has since earned good credits as a performer in numerous and professional theater productions. But Marvin says his forthcoming role as the orphan Tobias in Repertory Philippines' third staging of Stephen Sondheim's "Sweeney Todd" (opening June 14 at Onstage Greenhills 1) is the real milestone.

Did you take formal music lessons?

At formal voice lessons at all. Director Nelle Ermoso (who plays the lead role in "Sweeney Todd") was my first mentor in Trumpets. He still coaches and guides me. I took piano for a short while, until I learned to play it by ear.

What are your most memorable stage performances?

I played the title role in Nonoo Alas Repertory's "Bat Boy" last year. I also had good parts in "Aster Ace" and "High Society Musical." Trumpets' productions of "Hush's Big Ah," and "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe."

What else keeps you busy?

Right now, I'm recording my debut CD which will hopefully include one of my own compositions.

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'This Is It' worth the wait

JUST IN CASE BEFORE HE "This Is It" comeback concert series was scheduled to start in London on... King of Pop Michael Jackson died of cardiac arrest. Understandably grieving fans felt that he was cheated in these farewell performances—but not for long.

They were heartened by reports that many hours of rehearsal videos had been recorded during the show's long production process, and that the footage would be edited into a tribute film that fans could watch in lieu of the much-awaited concert.

That filmed musical has finally hit our screens, and the good news is that it's worth the long wait. At long last, MJ fans have a farewell show worth remembering their musical idol by. Even better, the movie includes "reality" footage that shows Jackson on top of his musical game, painstakingly rerunning his show into one of the best productions ever.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

It looks like he really did want what would turn out to be his farewell show to be a superlative production that would delight and excite his fans—and, in some numbers, he succeeded.

His topnotch production team, led by Kenny Ortega, also came up with a number of staging concepts that made the shots memorable, like a deft unveiling of iconic film footage that enabled Jackson to visually "interact" with the stellar likes of Rita Hayworth and Humphrey Bogart!

Also deeply appreciated was MJ's environmental anthem, pointing choreographic and the animations for grievous (as well as to highlight emerging talents like rock guitarist Orianthi Panagaris, singer Judith Hill and dancer Jennifer Beattie Nieto.

Jackson has often been described as a demanding perfectionist, but his support for young performing artists shows that he also had a generous, giving heart. See the two contrasting views of MJ contradictions? Not necessarily they simply underscore the fact that he was a confoundingly complicated artist and person, with a lot about him to share—and love.

In the final analysis, however, it's all about the music, and "This Is It" proves that Jackson's musical gift is shared and fated to enchant.

It goes way beyond his signature moves, pops and licks and even his dreamy, creamy mocha-milk, hospitrags over his elaborate parental choices and obsession with plastic surgery and redesigns, and could back all the way back to his early childhood, when he was compelled to become his family's top breadwinner and put up with parental excesses.

In the light of these dirt dishfingers, the young and vulnerable Michael could have found comfort and succor in his music, for it is natural one so far incapable of solving his deepest hurts and fears.

It is to Ortega's production's credit that, aside from entertaining viewers, it also enables them to get to know MJ better as a person. Even when his mannerisms are potential turn-offs, they have at the intensive preparation he's had to deal with throughout his life, so they are deceptively instructive.

As fitting end, the movie's "This Is It" is much more than the sum of its parts. It bids farewell, provides closure, reaffirms stylistic riches, shows Jackson often at his best and sometimes at his poorest even, etc. Ultimately, however, it is a tribute to an exceptional talent confirmed by 47 record-setting reasons and counting, the likes of whom we may never see again.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2009 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIVING Stars

Editor Bonnie G. Rolando

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Simply Sam Milby

Hunky actor shuns frills, goes for hi-tech gadgets

By Rayvel San Diego Jr.
Photos by Kenny Hamilcada

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT actor-singer Sam Milby describes himself as a "simple" dresser:

"I'm into plain, no-frills stuff. Most of the things in my closet are either black or white."

He built a spacious walk-in closet on the second floor of his home, adjacent to his spiffy bathroom.

Like the toiletries in the washroom, the clothes in the closet are neatly arranged—jackets and long-sleeved tops in one sec-

NEWS A

OUT OF THE CLOSET

BLACK Gucci boots, from Princess Sarah of Qatar

WHITE sneakers by DOLCE & GABBANA

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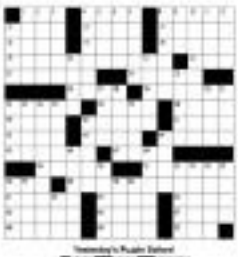

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

8			3	1			5	9
	4			6				
						1		7
1								6
			5		8			
7								5
2	7							
				3			8	
6	9			8	4			1

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

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Answer to previous puzzle

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2	4	6	5	8	7	9	3	1
5	7	8	3	9	1	6	2	4
1	3	2	9	4	6	8	7	5
8	5	9	1	7	3	2	4	6
7	6	4	2	5	8	1	9	3
9	2	7	6	3	4	5	1	9
9	1	3	6	2	5	4	8	7
4	8	5	7	1	9	3	6	2

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Simply . . .

Homepage 2

three shirts, caps and jeans in another.

Although he's an avowed Beach man, he shops for imported brands prior to concert tours abroad.

Shirts

"I'm not a big spender," Sam swears. "When abroad, I shop in outlet stores to save money."

He's partial to the Japanese brand, H&M. "The newest brands is in Hong Kong. Clothes in H&M are inexpensive and unique. You're assured that no one in Manila will have the same shirt as yours."

He has a new D-cruiz shirt. It's an all-white shirt. It's not well. But they're only available in the expo."

But Beach suits his lifestyle "perfectly," he says. "When I'm free, I usually go to the mall myself, to get the right sizes."

JEANS by Beach, his favorite for cool or hiking.

FLASHY pair by Zara

BALLER! Beach for World Vision, a cause that Sam supports

BLUE Ray Ban sunglasses

Jeans

For evening on his semi-idyllic, a Timoteo DEP-85 2009, he wears Beach's distress.

"Jeans should be a bit loose and the distress should be dark, to protect your legs from possible spills."

When picking pants, jeans or denim, the main factors he considers are style, cut and color. These days he goes for black jeans.

Headgear

For his head, he's partial to caps, mostly Beach. He also has a Blue Sox Bluetooth and a brown Banana Republic.

But a current obsession is motorcycle helmets. At the time of Living Stars' visit, he has one. A white Cabrig and a black Shark.

TEES, also by Beach, suit his simple lifestyle, the actor says.

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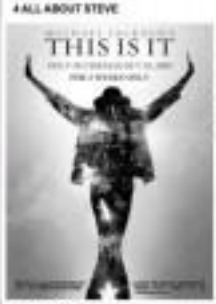
METRO EAST

1 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
2 ALL ABOUT STEVE
3 LAW ABIDING CITIZEN
4 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
5 ASTROBOY
6 JENNIFER'S BODY
7 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
8 PATIENT X

NOVALICHES | **PIONEER**

1 LAW ABIDING CITIZEN
2 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
3 PATIENT X
4 ALL ABOUT STEVE

1 ASTROBOY
2 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
3 ALL ABOUT STEVE
4 LAW ABIDING CITIZEN



Michael Jackson's THIS IS IT will offer fans and music lovers worldwide a rare behind-the-scenes look at his developed, created and rehearsed for his sold-out concerts that would have taken place beginning this summer in London's O2 Arena.

EXPERIENCE MICHAEL JACKSON

NOW SHOWING at MOVIEWORLD

STA. ROSA | **LIPA**

1 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
2 JENNIFER'S BODY
3 LAW ABIDING CITIZEN
4 PATIENT X

1 HALLOWEEN 2
2 PATIENT X
3 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
4 BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT

DASMARINAS | **IMUS**

1 SORORITY ROW
2 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
3 PATIENT X
4 LAW ABIDING CITIZEN

1 PATIENT X
2 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
3 LAW ABIDING CITIZEN
4 ALL ABOUT STEVE

STARMILLS

1 RED CLIFF
2 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
3 SORORITY ROW
4 PATIENT X
5 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
6 THE FINAL DESTINATION

ANGELES | **TACLOBAN**

1 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
2 PATIENT X
3 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
4 THE GAMER

1 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
2 PATIENT X
3 THE ECHO

BACOLOD | **ILOILO**

1 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
2 THE TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE
3 FAME
4 HALLOWEEN 2
5 THE ECHO
6 PATIENT X

1 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
2 PATIENT X
3 THE ECHO
4 THE HURT LOCKER
5 HALLOWEEN 2
6 RED CLIFF

GEN. SANTOS (NOW OPEN!)

1 PATIENT X
2 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
3 THE ECHO
4 MY SISTER'S KEEPER

WATCH it LIVE via SATELLITE at Robinsons Movieworld

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Simply Sam Milby

From page 6

"I plan to buy another. I've been advised to get one in a lighter color, to make sure I'm visible even at night—especially since I always wear dark clothes."

Cufflinks and black are his friends of choice because "they have an inner feeling that protects the skin from bacteria."

Books, DVDS

Aside from his collection of autographed books, like "Wild at Heart" and "How Movies Did," Sam has built an extensive library of movies on DVD—all original.

"I have roughly 200 titles. I'm a regular at Astor Video. I don't buy pirated discs. I watch movies almost every day—any kind, even cartoons."

The titles on his DVD shelf include such eclectic picks as "The Incredibles," "Mean Girls," "Natural Practical" and "50 First Dates."

Toys, gadgets

Sam's a kid at heart. Besides indulging his gamer-playing stuffed toy: "It was a gift from Gidongs. Sweet bata. It's so cute."

He's tech-savvy and is updated on the latest gadgets. Sam says he has iPhone. He also relies heavily on his computer, which he uses to store everything, from photos to music (by Justin Sparks, BENR among others).

"I can look up everything myself."

He also has traditional board games at home, like Pictionary and Trivial Pursuit. "My family and I used to play Pictionary in the US."

GUITAR-strumming teddy bear is a gift from Gidongs Sweet bata. It's so cute.

Few people know that he's a whiz at the Rubik's Cube and Mahjong puzzles.

Computer, cameras

He uses the computer to answer e-mail and play games.

Sam explains: "I search the Autocad 61 or the computer. It's not a keyboard. It's a controller. Parang, but I am teaching myself how to play the piano. I don't know anything about chord progressions, though ... I just listen closely."

MAIA. Sweet Sweets when it comes to guitar

He's a self-taught photographer, too.

"I have a Bolex film camera when I was in [illegible] school, but I also have a Canon 5D when I want to go digital."

Drums, guitars

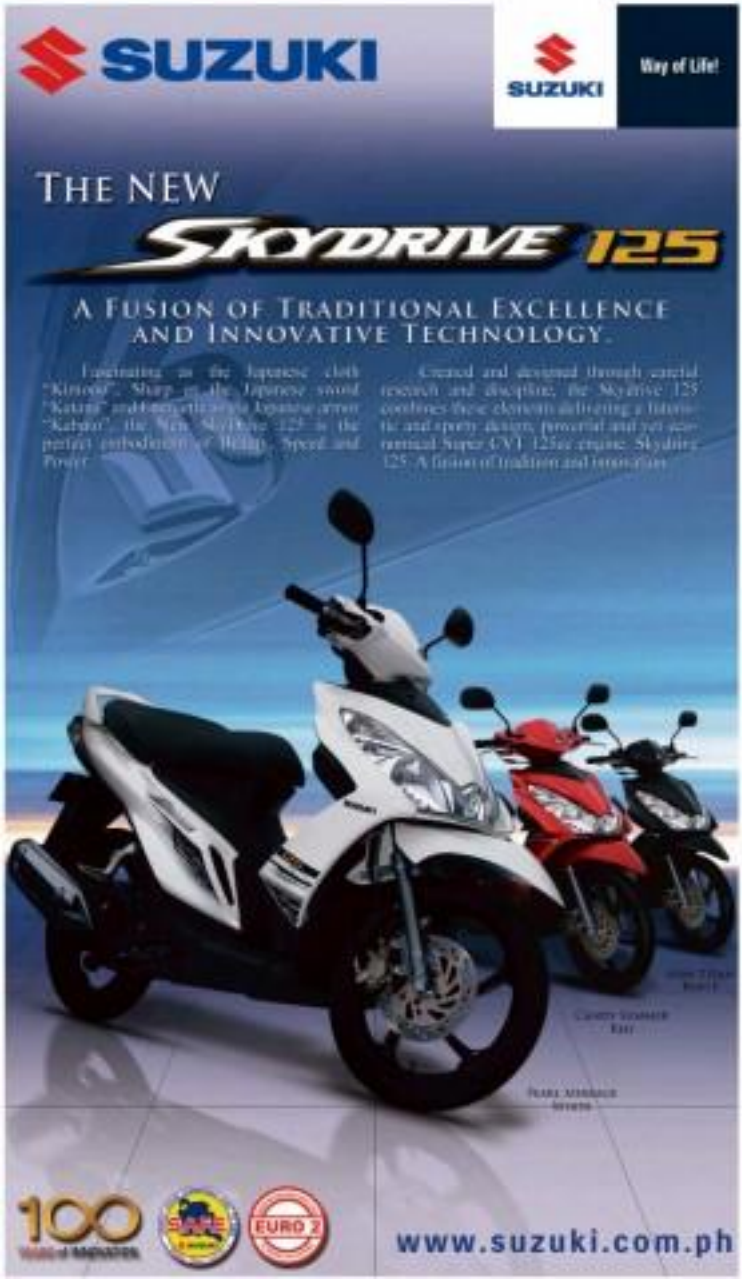
As a owners of his computer, videogame and movie collections go, he's an expert.

Yes, he is a self-taught drummer as well. Unlike his piano-playing, however, he is more confident about his drum skills.

Again, he's a self-taught (and self-assured) guitarist.

"I have three guitars: Two acoustic, one electric. They're all Ibad Bood Incidents—good brand, but a little pricey."

Naturally, he loves strumming while playing the music video game Guitar Hero, and is addicted to other PlayStation titles like Assassin's Creed and Metal Gear.

"I've played as long as four hours to one go."

SELF-taught shutterbug shoots offline Canon 20D.